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TWELVE

Dissertations

OUT OF

Monsieur *Le Clerk's*

GENESIS,

CONCERNING

The
- *Hebrew Tongue.*
- *Manner of Interpreting the Bible.*
- *Author of the Pentateuch.*
- *Temptation of* Eve *by the Serpent.*
- *Flood.*
- *Confusion of Languages.*
- *Original of Circumcision.*
- *Divine Appearances in the* Old Testament.
- *Subversion of* Sodom.
- *Pillar of Salt.*
- *Coming of* Shiloh.
- *Several Obscure Texts in* Genesis *Explain'd and Illustrated.*

Done out of Latin by Mr. *BROWN.*

To which is Added,

A Dissertation concerning the *Israelites* Passage through the *Red Sea,* By another Hand.

Ornari res ipsa negat, contenta docere. Hor.

LONDON, Printed and are to be Sold by *R. Baldwin,* near the *Oxford-Arms* in *Warwick-Lane.* 1696.

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THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

THE following Dissertations contain such Variety of Learning, and Liberty of Thought, out of the common road of Commentators, and Divines (who generally confine themselves within the Rules and Pale of the Church) that the Publishing of them in English was thought necessary for the instructing and polishing of those, who imploy their happy Hours in the Study of the Holy Scriptures. 'Tis true, Two very Reverend Prelates of our own Church have lately treated of these Matters not without Reflecting on the Author Mr. Le Clerk; yet 'tis no ill manners to cloath him in the same

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Language, that the Juſtice and Reaſon of their Contempt and Accuſations may the more clearly appear.

I am not inſenſible of the many Calumnies fixt on the Learned Author upon the account of theſe Diſſertations, *and the* Letters *he formerly Publiſh'd concerning* Inſpiration, *and the* Lives of ſome Fathers, *yet his late* Treatiſe of the Cauſes of Incredulity, and the Truth of Chriſtianity, *hath diſſipated all thoſe Aſperſions, and demonſtrates to the World, that he could never give any occaſion to Infidels or Unbelievers to inſult the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, or the Lines of the Church; 'tis maliciouſly ſuggeſted, that he hath forgot to reckon his own Writings amongſt his many Cauſes of Deiſm, and Scepticiſm; for tho in his* Juvenile *Paſtimes at* Saumur, *and* Geneva, *he might ſow ſome wild Tares, and run beyond the bounds of Diſcretion in Matters of Faith; yet by culture and ripeneſs of years, he arriv'd at that ſtrength and preſence of mind, that all his Productions became chaſte, and very charming, inſomuch that the Illuſtrious City of* Amſterdam *adopted him into the Number of her Profeſſors, where he adorns the Oriental Chair, and deſerves to ſhine in a more Noble Sphere; but the Climate, we live in, is too groſs to receive ſuch a fine and exalted* Genius, *born to illuminate the dark Myſteries of Antiquity, and to let us into the* Sanctum Sanctorum; *for certainly never any Mortal came better*

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better prepar'd to unvail the Beauty of the Scriptures; *many great Endowments meeting in him; a ſingular Penetration, vaſt reading and Study, a profound skill in the Languages with an univerſal erudition, a clear Judgment, an honeſt Candor, and a Sublimity above Party or Faction; Talents not very common among Thoſe who have the Honour to unlock thoſe Venerable Archives.*

The Bible *without diſpute contains more good Morals, and more hidden Treaſures than all the Volumes of the* Alexandrian, *the* Vatican, *or* Bodleian *Libraries, and therefore our Libertines have no reaſon to deride the pains taken to open them.*

But ſome cry out aloud, there lurks a Snake under the Graſs, and Venom ſprouts out of the Mouth of the tempting Serpent; Beware of his winding Inſinuations, and his gentile Turnings. Oh incurable Jealouſie! that will not diſtinguiſh between Superſtition and Religion, between Godlineſs, and Gain, or between the Ancient and Modern Chriſtianity. *A Man muſt be of a very ſower habit of Body, that will not bear an innocent Freedom, eſpecially in an Age and Kingdom, where* Nullius in Verba *is the* Motto.

Criticks and Philoſophers have always claim'd a particular ſort of Liberty, and Boldneſs, which the wiſeſt States have thought fit to diſpenſe with; for Truth is not eaſily come at, many rubs and thorns lying in the way, ſo that few work thro'

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thro' it. Therefore the same Indulgence, that hath been granted to Selden, Grotius, Bochart, Marsham, F. Simons, Spencer, *and Others in their Observations upon the* Hebrews, *and in all their* Oriental *Enquiries, may also reasonably be expected for Monsieur* Le Clerk, *who often refines upon them all, and keeps within the* Decorum, *which a Wise Man would never exceed.*

What hath been said for the Philological *Part may extend to the* Physical, *in which if M.* Le Clerk *hath offended any nice and delicate Scrupulosity, He hath many Orthodox Predecessors in the same kind, both beyond the Seas, and in this Country, not to name any more than Bishop* Wilkins, Seth Ward, Isaac Vossius, *the Learned Bishop of* Worcester, *the celebrated* Master *of the* Charter-House, *who Apologizes very ingeniously for so doing; but there is a sort of Men, who cannot endure any dissent from* Moses *his* Philosophy, *(unless it be in themselves) and pretend to steer exactly according to the Mosaick Chart in all their Systems; yet so unfortunate are they, that they frequently run upon the same Sands and Rocks, where they have split others;* Clodius accusat Mœchum, Catilina Cethegum; *and such is the luck of these upright Authors, who very awkardly strain the Phantomes of their own Brains into the* Old Testament, *that they put all into confusion, and had better let it rest in Sacred Silence; the Church would do well to enjoyn such Writers, not to weave their own Threads with*

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with those of Moſes, *leaſt the old Nap ſhould be loſt, and a party-colour'd Coat appear in its room. What a monſtrous Moſaick dreſs have we in* Whiſton's Theory *with a train of Comets at his Tail; in* Woodward's Eſſay *with all the Mountains down about his Heels; in* Nicholl's Conference *with multitudes of Arks, or new Miracles of preſerving in, or elſe creating* de novo *after the Flood, and with his Lyons in* Greenland.

Gens ratione furens, & mentem paſta Chimæris.

'Tis wonderful that theſe Men ſhould venture to beat up the unenvy'd Solitudes of a Carthuſian, (*who never hunts after the common prey of Dominion and Wealth, as being inconſiſtent with our Bleſſed Saviour's Kingdom*) *and at the ſame time expoſe themſelves to the proſecutions of every vulgar Eye; but with this difference, that he hath left* Moſes *pure, free, and undefiled as he found him, whereas they have polluted him with their own mixtures, and make him act what part they pleaſe, in any habit, or under any maſk, as beſt ſerves their Scenes and Opera's. How ſhall the Children of* Iſrael *know their true* Moſes, *ſo patch'd and diſfigur'd with the borrowed Plumes of ſuch Birds of Paradiſe. The* Apoſtle *gave good advice againſt the vain* Philoſophy *of theſe Men, who corrupt the* Scriptures *by introducing their own Chimerical* Hypotheſes *into them, that thereby*

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thereby they may ſtamp them Standard, and cry down all others as Counterfeit, of baſe allay, or of falſe weight. 'Tis to be wiſh'd that this infamous piece of Quackery *was baniſh'd out of* Parnaſſus, *and that* Apollo *admoniſh'd his Subjects to treat one another in modeſt and humble Manners, avoiding the haughty Titles of* Supremacy *and* Infalibility; *for Opinion and Probability cannot be a certain Rule, or any Foundation to domineer over one another. Monſieur* Le Clerk *may be allow'd to be as good an Interpreter as any* Prelate *in* Chriſtendom; *and Dr.* Burnet *as great a Friend to* Moſes *as any* Chaplain *or* Vertuoſo *in* England.

Glory to God in the higheſt,
Peace on Earth,
Good Will among Men.

Diſſertation

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Dissertation I.

Concerning the Hebrew Tongue.

I. *The Design of these Dissertations.* II. *That the Hebrew Tongue is no more the Primitive, than any of the other Oriental Languages.* III. *That the Difference of Languages arose from the Dispersion of Mankind.* IV. *That* Abraham *spoke the Chaldean Tongue.* V. *That Hebrew was originally the Language of the* Canaanites. VI. *That it was a barren ambiguous Language, and carried but to a small Perfection by the* Israelites. VII. *In what Condition it was after the Babylonian Captivity.* VIII. *What Care the* Israelites *at that time took of the Sacred Volumes.*

ALTHO' 'tis not my Intention in these Preliminary Discourses to ramble through all those common Places, which relate to the Old Testament in General, yet I thought it improper to put a Treatise of this Nature into the Reader's hand, without any foregoing Address or Ceremony. As I was frequently obliged to set down several

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things in my Annotations for known or granted, because I could not prove them there at large, without running into perpetual Digressions, which I always studiously avoided; so I judged it *à propos* to handle and prove them more copiously in these Dissertations, least the prejudiced Reader should imagine that I have all along built upon a precarious Foundation. Now the things which I barely deliver'd in my Comments without farther Proof, may be chiefly reduced to these three Heads: 1. The Hebrew Tongue. 2. The Method I follow'd in my Interpretation. 3. Whether *Moses* was the Author of the Pentateuch, and what end he proposed to himself in writing. I shall begin with that concerning the Hebrew Tongue, and manage the other Points as they follow in order. But before I proceed any farther, the Reader is to be informed, that I never designed to discuss all the Questions that are usually proposed concerning that Language, but only such as are of absolute Necessity towards the better understanding of my Commentary, which I shall handle just as they come into my Head, without confining my self too Religiously to Method and Regularity: Therefore he is not to expect any compleat elaborate Discourse at my hands, which I neither promise here, nor ever had it so much as in my Thoughts to perform.

II. The Jews out of a Fond Affection to their own Country, and several Christians who are apt

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apt to be too much influenced by them, commonly pretend, that the Hebrew Language was that which *Adam*, the first Parent of Mankind, spoke. The most plausible Argument for which Opinion, is deduced from a few Names and Etymologies; but tho' the Maintainers of it boast, that they put the Matter beyond all Dispute, yet I am inclined to believe, they are not so Invincible as 'tis pretended. To which purpose 'twill be necessary to hear the full Merits of the Cause, before we proceed to give Sentence.

1. In the first place they alledge the Name of the first Man *Adam*, which in the Hebrew Tongue alone alludes to the word *Earth*, out of which his Body was form'd, for only the Jews call the Earth *Adama*. This *Paronomasia* or Similitude of Names, plainly appears in the second Chapter of *Genesis* verse 7. *Et formavit Jehova Deus Adam pulverem ex Adama, hoc est, terrâ.* The *Chaldees* indeed have the word *Adam*, but then they call the Earth *Arhah*, which Term has no Affinity with the name of our first Parent.

2. For the same reason *Eve*'s Name *Hhavah* is derived from the word *Hhai*, Living, because she was the Mother of all *Hhai*, Living, *Gen.* 3. 20. Now this Etymology is corrupted in the *Chaldee*, which renders it *chol hne enascha, of all the Sons of Men.*

3. So in the second Chapter of *Genesis*, v. 23. *She*, says *Adam* speaking of his Wife, *shall be*

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called Iſchah, *Woman*, becauſe *Meiſch, ſhe is taken out of Man.* Therefore ſince this chiming of the words is to be found in no other Language but this, they conclude that it was unqueſtionably the very ſame that *Adam* ſpoke.

4. After *Abel* was kill'd, *Seth* was born to our firſt Mother, *Eve*, whoſe name ſhe derives from a *Radix* in the Hebrew Tongue, *Gen.* 4. 25. *She call'd his name* Scheth; *For*, ſays ſhe, *God has raiſed me up*, Schath, *another Son in the room of* Abel.

Theſe and ſeveral other Names are brought by the *Rabbies*, to prove, as they imagine, that Hebrew is the Primitive Language; and they urge them with that Aſſurance and Oſtentation, as if 'twere down-right Obſtinacy to contradict ſo evident a Truth; but we have many weighty Reaſons on our ſide, to incline us to believe, that the Primitive Language was no more related to the *Hebrew*, than it was either to the *Chaldee* or *Arabick*. But that the Reader may better comprehend our Meaning, we own that Opinion ſeems to be moſt probable to us, which maintains that neither *Hebrew*, *Chaldee*, nor *Arabick*, nor indeed any other Oriental Language, was that which *Adam* ſpoke, becauſe in proceſs of Time, and by the Diſperſion of Mankind, it was ſplit into ſeveral Dialects of the Eaſtern Tongues, and begot the above-mentioned Languages, and ſome others nearly reſembling them. Thus, for inſtance, the Language of the Old *Romans*, is neither that which the

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the *Italians*, *French* or *Spaniards* use, and yet it produced these three Languages, and has left several of its old Remainders in them. I know the *Rabbins* are of a different Opinion, who pretend that it was preserv'd unmixt and intire in the Family of *Heber*; but I shall soon demonstrate, that this is precariously affirm'd, and wants Reasons to support it.

As for what relates to the Argument borrow'd from the Etymology of Names, it is to be observ'd in the first place, that some of them are not so much proper Names given to the Children at their Birth, as *Cognomina*, or Sirnames by which they were known to Posterity, and so in process of time passed for proper Names. For which reason they might sometimes be changed, and yet the *Paronomasia* of the Primitive Language be happily preserv'd at the same time, as will evidently appear by the following Examples.

Adam, as all the World knows, is not a proper Name, but bestow'd on the first Man, κατ' ἐξοχὴν, or by way of Pre-eminence, and so our first Father might be thus call'd by the *Hebrews*, tho' his Contemporaries call'd him otherwise. Nor is the Agreement of the words, which we confess falls out patly enough in the Hebrew Tongue, an Argument to the contrary, for therefore Man might be call'd *Adam* by the *Hebrews*, because they knew the first Man's Body was form'd of Clay. Thus in the Latin Tongue, which I believe no Man in the

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World ever dreamt to be the Primitive Language, we might say that God call'd the first Man *Homo*, because he was form'd *ex humo*, *i. e.* out of the Ground. Besides the same thing might accidentally happen in the words *Isch* and *Ischah*, as amongst the ancient Latins (*a*) *vir* and *vira* were in use.

We might here produce the frequent Alterations of Names, even of those we call Proper, but the Reader may find them in the Learned *Grotius*'s Annotations on *Gen.* 11. 1. and in *Huetius*'s *Demonstratio Evangelica*, Propos. 4. c. 13. §. 4. We shall at present content our selves to give an Instance or two, not taken notice of by them, of an Etymology happily expressed in another Language. Every one has heard of a Famous City in *Egypt*, which the Greeks call'd Πηλούσιον, which name (for 'tis of Greek Extraction) is rightly derived ἀπὸ τοῦ πηλοῦ, *from dirt*, because it was built in a dirty place. For thus *Strabo* in his Seventeenth Book, Page 552. of the *Geneva* Edition put out by *Casaubon*, Αὐτὸ τὸ Πηλούσιον κύκλῳ περικείμενα ἔχει ἕλη, ἅτινες βάραθρα καλοῦσι καὶ τέλματα. ——— Ὠνόμασται δ' ἀπὸ τοῦ πηλοῦ, καὶ τῶν τελμάτων.

(*a*) See what *Festus* in *Querquetulana viræ* says, *Fœminas antiqui quas nunc dicimus, Viras appellabant, unde adhuc permanent Virgines & Viragines.* St. *Jerom* uses this last word, whom herein we had no mind to imitate, because *Virago* neither signifies what *Ischa* does in Hebrew, nor *Vira* in Latin, but a Woman of a Masculine Spirit.

Now

Now if the Books of the Hebrew Prophets were all loſt, Who would not Swear that this City had no other Name? Who would not believe that it was built by ſome *Greeks* that ſettled there, or by the Poſterity of *Lagus*, and bore this Greek Name ever ſince its beginning. However 'tis undeniable from *Ezekiel* 30.14,15. that it was call'd *Sin* by the *Egyptians*, which word ſignifies *dirt*, as *Bochart* has obſerv'd, *Phaleg.* l. 4. c. 27.

The ſame has happen'd in the name of another place not far diſtant from *Peluſium*. *Diodorus Siculus* in the firſt Book of his *Bibliotheca* mightily commends *Actiſanes* the *Æthiopian*, who after he had conquer'd *Ammoſes* King of the *Egyptians*, and ſubdued the whole Country, neither put the Guilty to death, nor yet wholly diſmiſs'd them unpuniſh'd, but carried multitudes of the Condemned, he thus uſed them, Ἀποτεμὼν αὐτῶν τὰς μυκτῆρας κατῴκισεν ἐν τοῖς ἐρήμοις καὶ ἐρήμοις χώραις, κτίσας πόλιν ἀπὸ τῆς συμπτώματος Ῥινοκόλουραν (or Ῥινοκολλουραν) προσαγορεύσαν. *Cutting off their Noſes, he tranſplanted them into the fartheſt parts of a deſart Region, and built a City, and called it from this accident* Rinocolura. *Strabo* in his ſixteenth Book makes the ſame Remark, and ſo does *Stephanus* upon this word. Now thoſe Perſons that do not know, that the *Egyptians* at this time did not ſpeak Greek, would eaſily ſuffer themſelves to be perſwaded, eſpecially ſeeing it named among the Cities of *Egypt*,

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Egypt, that *Rinocolura* was the very name by which this City went among the *Egyptians*.

But if any one would rather desire to see Examples fetch'd from the Holy Scriptures, he may observe how the Seventy Interpreters turn the Proper Names of the Bible into Greek, *Gen.* 11. 9. Διὰ τοῦτο ἐκλήθη τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς Σύγχυσις (*Babel*) ὅτι ἐκεῖ συνέχεε κύριος χείλη πάσης τῆς γῆς. *Therefore the name of it was called Confusion* (*Babel* or *Babylon*) *because there the Lord confounded the Lips of the whole Earth.* See likewise *Gen.* 31. 47, & 32. 20.

Nay what is highly remarkable, *Moses* has deriv'd the Original of his own Name from an Hebrew word, and has introduced the Daughter of *Pharaoh* speaking Hebrew, who, without question expreſt her self in the Egyptian Tongue, *Exod.* 2. 10. *The Child grew up, and his Nurse brought him to the Daughter of* Pharaoh, *who called his name* Moſche; *because, said she, I drew him out of the Water*, Miſhithihou. And the reaſon of it is plain, for ſince *Moses* ſaw he could eaſily imitate the Egyptian Origination in the Hebrew Tongue, he made no Scruple to bring in this Princeſs, expreſſing her ſelf after that manner. But in the Egyptian Tongue he is called Μωυσῆ, that is, *taken out of the Water*; for with the Old Egyptians Μωὺ ſignified *Water*, and σῆ *taken out*. Thus in the New Teſtament, he that was called by the Syrians *Chipha* or *Chepha*, was called Πέτρος, *Peter*, by the Greeks; and ſo that *Paronomaſia*, which our Saviour

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Saviour used in the Hebrew or *Syro-Chaldaïc*, was conveniently enough translated into the Greek Tongue, *Matt.* 16. 17.

However I would by no means be thought to affirm, that the Name of *Adam*, and such-like, were changed: For it might so happen, that both the Primitives and Derivatives of the first Language were often preserved in the Hebrew; But we must not conclude from thence, that therefore *Adam* spoke pure Hebrew. There are some Names, which with equal Felicity may be deduced out of the *Chaldee*; as for instance, the Name *Hhavah*, for *Hhai* signifies *Living*, no less in *Chaldee* than it does in *Hebrew*. Nay, there are some Names which cannot Analogically be derived from the Hebrew Roots, although *Moses* deduces them from those Roots, which if we should urge, as the *Rabbins* do, to support the contrary Opinion, we should from thence conclude, that the Hebrew Tongue has no Affinity with the Language of the *Antediluvians*. Thus *Gen.* 2. 1. *And she brought forth* Cain, *and said, I have got* (Kanithi) *a man of the Lord.* The Name *Kajin*, according to the common Rules, ought to be deduced from *Koun*, which signifies to Lament in *Pihel*; as *Kajits* the *Summer*, from *Kouts*; Tsaïid, *Hunting*, from *Tsoud*; and several more of the like nature. From the Root *Kanah* we should more properly deduce *Kanovi*. Now, as we have observed, if we were minded to copy after the *Rabbins*, and follow their Conduct, we might

say,

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ſay, That from hence 'tis evident, that the Hebrew Tongue is not the firſt, ſince *Moſes* was not able to expreſs in it the Etymology of the word *Kain*. We might gather the ſame from *Geneſis* Chap. 5. v. 29. where the Father of *Noah* calls the Name of his Son *Noahh, ſaying, he will Comfort us, Jenahhamenou*, for if we are to derive the Name of this Reſtorer of Mankind from *Nahham*, we ought to have called him *Nohhem*, that is to ſay, *a Comforter*, not *Noahh*, which can be deduced from nothing elſe but *Noahh* quievit. So that if a few happy Etymologies will prove the Antediluvian Language to have been the ſame with the Hebrew, ſurely thoſe of a different Nature will demonſtrate the contrary. But ſince both theſe Propoſitions cannot be true, what remains, but that we ſhould own that the Hebrew Language is not indeed the firſt, but the Off-ſpring of it; as are likewiſe the *Chaldee* and *Arabick*, and that ſome Remainders of it are ſtill preſerved in theſe three Dialects. True it is, that the Original of the Name of *Tubal Cain*, which is neither to be traced out of *Hebrew* nor *Chaldee*, is plainly found in the *Arabick*, as we have ſhewn at the third (*b*) Chapter v. 22. Beſides

(*b*) 'Tis worth Obſervation, ſays our Author here, that the two words, of which this name is compounded, ſignifie in the Arabian *Laminam æris, aut ferri*; but as far as we can find by the Holy Writ, which is our only reſort in this caſe, they are wholly unknown to the Hebrew Tongue; though, as it appears by the Context, there is no queſtion to be made, but this is the true ſignification of them.

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the Etymology of the word *Babel* is more happily deduced from the *Chaldee* word *Bilbel confudit*, than from the Hebrew *Balal*, which ſignifies the ſame; for there is a greater Affinity between *Babel* and *Bilbel*, than between *Babel* and *Balal*.

But to deliver my Sentiments freely, concerning the *Antediluvian* and ſome other ancient Names, many of them were not ſo much given them as Names at their Birth to diſtinguiſh them from other Men, as they are to be looked upon as Sirnames, afterwards beſtowed upon them for ſome particular Event or Accident that befel them. And from hence it came to paſs, as we have already ſhewn, that theſe Names were changed by the *Hebrews*, as 'tis certain ſome of them were changed by the *Arabians*. The firſt begotten Son of *Adam* was *Cain*, as *Moſes* tells us, *a Tiller of the Ground*, which furniſh'd the *Arabians* with an occaſion to reckon the Lord knows who, one *Habdel hharits*, that is to ſay, the *Servant of a Tiller*, among the Sons of *Adam*; which rather ſignifies *Cain's* manner of Living, than another Son of our firſt Parents, as ſome People imagin'd. Concerning which Conſult, *Schickard* in the *Proœmium* to his Catalogue of the Perſian Kings. His other Son was called *Hebel*, that is, *a fading thing that ſoon diſappears*, becauſe he was kill'd by his Brother in his Youth. We know indeed that ſome Expoſitors have conjectur'd, that from a Prophetical Spirit this Name

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Name was given him at his Birth by his Parents; but a bare simple Conjecture can never amount to a Demonstration. A Person of singular Piety, and consequently instructed in all the Knowledge of Divine Matters, which those Times were capable of, is called *Hhanoch* from the Verb *Hhanach*, that is, *docuit, instituit*, whence the Participle *Hhanouch*, doctus, *learned*. For this reason the same Man is called by the Arabians *Idris*, which signifies *learned*; for *dara* with the *Hebrews* and *Arabians*, is *accuratè & subtiliter indagavit*. His Son was called in After-ages *Methouschelahh*, i. e. *After his Death a breaking out*, to wit, of Waters, happened. After the Flood *Peleg*, that is, *Division* the Son of *Heber*, *in whose days the Earth was divided*, Chap. 10. v. 25. We have also observed on the (c) Tenth Chapter v. 8. that *Nimrod* was no very honourable Title for him to whom it was given. Perhaps we might discover several others of the like kind, if we had a fuller and larger History of those Times. But these we

(c) Monsieur *le Clerk* here observes, that *Nimrod* is derived from the Hebrew Radix *Marad*, to Rebel, from whence the Arabick word *Maridon* is derived, which signifies *Obstinate*, *Proud*, or *Insolent*. And such sort of a Man he must needs be, continues our Author, who first dissolved the Paternal Government, and affected a Superiority over his Brethren. I can never perswade my self, that this Name was given him as soon as he was born, no more than several other Names were given to others, which have a relation to their Disposition, or the Inventions they found out. They rather seem to be their *Cognomina* or Sirnames, of which their Posterity had some remembrance, when their Names were utterly forgotten.

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have cited, are more than sufficient to shew that some of those Sirnames might be changed by *Moses*.

And therefore their Argument of Primitive Antiquity, deduced barely from Names, is not of that Consequence as the *Rabbins*; and those that implicitly follow their Authority may imagine. However since the other reasons that are alledged by the Jews fall infinitely short of this, we lie under no Obligation to trifle away our time in confuting them, especially since the Vanity of them has been already demonstrated by the Learned *Huetius*.

III. There seems to have been but one Language before the Deluge: This we are sure of, that there was but one in the Family of *Noah*, till the Fantastical Project of the Building of *Babel* was set on foot, that is to say, as long as they continued all in the same place. But after that, upon the account of some Differences arising at *Babylon*, Mankind was dispersed into several Provinces of the World; and when in process of time these distant Families preserved either none, or but a small Correspondence one with another, several new Dialects sprung up. Thus we see that the Latin Tongue has given birth to the Italian, Spanish and French Tongues, not to mention the several Dialects of each of these. So the Saxon Tongue alone begot the Modern German, the Dutch and English. We have * elsewhere shewn that the variety

* See this handled at large in the sixth Dissertation.

of

of Languages did not immediately arise by any ſudden miraculous Impreſſion of the Divine Power; and indeed thoſe that maintain the contrary Opinion, own that there was rather a variety of Dialects, than of new Tongues.

Therefore the Primitive or firſt Language has upon ſeveral accounts been changed; as for inſtance, it was turn'd by the *Arabians* into the *Arabick*, by the *Chaldees* it was wreſted into the *Chaldean*, and by the *Canaanites* inſenſibly changed into the *Canaanean* Dialect. The Jews, who fanſied it to be the Hebrew Tongue, pretend it remain'd without Change or Corruption in the Family of *Heber*, which nevertheleſs is no where atteſted in the Holy Scripture. Nay, on the other ſide, it ſufficiently intimates, that the Poſterity of *Heber*, who continued on the other ſide the *Euphrates*, rather ſpoke *Chaldee*, as we ſhall ſee anon.

Since therefore the *Rabbins* are not able to produce one poſitive Teſtimony out of the Bible, to prove that the Antediluvian Language came down intire and incorrupted to the Deſcendants of *Heber*, they endeavour, which is the laſt Refuge of a declining Cauſe, to evince it by far-fetch'd Reaſons. They pretend that neither *Heber* nor his Son *Peleg*, from whom the *Iſraelites* are lineally deſcended, were concerned in building the Tower of *Babel*. But this is a downright Dream, ſupported by no manner of reaſon, as we have ſhewn in our ſixth Diſſertation.

Firſt,

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First, They pretend that the Family of *Cham*, assisted by some of the Posterity of *Shem* and *Japhet*, fell upon this design, and that *Nimrod* was the chief Surveyor and Encourager of the Work, which they gather chiefly from *Gen.* 10. 9, 10. where *Babel, Erech, Acchad and Chalne in the Land of Sinaar, are said to be the beginning of Nimrod's Kingdom.* But nothing more can be evinced from hence, but only that *Nimrod*, after the rest of Mankind had quitted *Babylon*, continued there still with his Family, and was either the Master or Founder of those Cities. Secondly, They mightily inveigh against the Impiety of the Builders of *Babel* in most Tragical Strains, and thence conclude that the Godly Patriarchs, of which number *Heber* was one, were not engaged in that wicked Design: But we have shewn, that though for certain reasons God Almighty was pleased to disapprove the Design, yet there was no Wickedness in it. Besides I would fain know who it was inform'd the Jews that *Heber* was so Pious and Godly a Person? I am sure his Piety is no where commended; nay on the contrary, *Abraham's* Ancestors who liv'd on the other side the *Euphrates*, are not obscurely charged with Idolatry in (*d*) *Joshua* 24. 2. Thirdly, They

(*d*) The Passage in *Joshua* is this, *Your Fathers dwelt on the other side of the Flood in old time, even* Terah *the Father of* Abraham, *and the Father of* Nachor, *and they served* Other Gods. And indeed the old Jews derived the beginning of their Religion from *Abraham*, who as *Josephus* tells us, *lib.* 1. *c.* 8. of his Jewish Antiquities, Πρῶτος Τολμᾷ was the first that had the Courage to profess one God the Creator of all things.

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pretend that the Posterity of *Heber* escaped the Punishment which this bold Attempt drew upon the rest of Mankind, since they always preserved the Hebrew Language in its Primitive Purity and Perfection. But we need not now repeat, that the Language, which afterwards was called the *Hebrew*, can with no more pretence set up for the first Tongue than the *Chaldee*, for we hope we have already demonstrated that Point, but I would fain ask them a few questions. If *Heber* and his Sons had no share in this Transgression (if it deserve that name) how happened it that the Posterity of *Joktan*, who was the Son of *Heber* abovementioned, came to speak Arabick? How came it to pass, that most of the Children of *Shem*, who, as they pretend, was none of the Builders of *Babel*, that his Children, I say, who settled beyond the *Euphrates*, either spoke *Chaldee* or some other Language more remote from the Hebrew? In a word, whatever the *Rabbins* impudently prate of the Hebrew Tongue's being preserv'd in one Family, it is, in my Opinion, the Product of their own empty lying Brains, which in all Ages of the World were known to be Famous for inventing of Fables, and *Heber*'s Posterity liable to the common Fate of the rest of Mankind, as they came to be scatter'd into various Regions, so no doubt of it but they expressed their meaning in different Sounds.

If

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If we ſhould then enquire, what was the Language that *Abraham* ſpoke on the other ſide the *Euphrates*, (letting bare Conjectures, or rather Rabbinical Comments alone) the moſt probable Opinion is, That he ſpoke that Language which not long after was received in thoſe places, I mean the *Chaldee*. He lived till the ſeventieth Year of his Life, perhaps, at *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, whither one of his Anceſtors went and ſetled, after Mankind had reſolved to ſeek their Fortunes in different Countries. Afterwards he continued for ſome time at *Haran* in *Meſopotamia*.

Now 'tis manifeſt beyond all Diſpute, that *Chaldee* was ſpoke in theſe places, in the days of *Jacob* the Grand-child of *Abraham*; for in *Gen.* 31. 47. *Laban* is ſaid to have called a heap of Stones erected in remembrance of the Covenant he made with *Jacob*, *Jegar ſchaha dentha*, which words are merely *Chaldee*, and ſignifie the *Heap of Witneſs*. Nor does the Language of his Grand-father *Nachor* ſeem to be any other than this, becauſe Languages do not uſe to change in ſo ſhort a courſe of time; for 'tis to no purpoſe to ſay that the Poſterity of *Peleg* preſerved the Hebrew Tongue among themſelves, ſince no reaſon can be aſſigned, why *Laban*, who deſcended from him, as well as *Abraham*, ſpoke the Chaldean Tongue, while the reſt of the Gentiles ſpoke another. Beſides if the Hebrew Language was in uſe among the Deſcendants of *Peleg* beyond *Euphrates*, cer-

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tainly some remainders of it would be shewn us, since 'tis an undeniable Truth, that the Aramean or Chaldean Dialect was spoken on the East of *Euphrates*. In short, no tolerable cause can be assigned, why only *Abraham*'s Family should preserve the old Language in *Canaan*, and propagate it to his Posterity, and yet the other Children of *Peleg* in *Mesopotamia* should utterly forget it, and learn a new Dialect. As the Posterity of *Peleg*, that fixt their Habitations beyond the *Euphrates*, had frequent Intermarriages with the Inhabitants of those places, so likewise the Children of *Abraham* not only took them Wives out of their Father's Family, as *Isaac* and *Jacob* did, but also married Canaanitish Women, as is evident by the Example of *Jacob*'s Sons.

The Sacred Writers expresly tell us, that in the following Ages, on the North and South of *Mesopotamia*, the Syrian Tongue was spoken, which the Jews did not understand; but we are no where told, that they were ignorant of the Language of their Neighbours the *Canaanites*. At the same time I do not deny but that there may be different Dialects in one and the same Language, as we find by experience in all Modern Tongues, but still those Dialects are understood by all the Neighbours.

When *Sennacherib* Monarch of *Assyria*, that is to say, King not only of the Nations beyond the *Tygris*, but likewise of the *Upper-Mesopotamia*, sent an Ambassador to *Hezekiah* King of *Judah*,

Judah, to stir up the People to a Rebellion: *Hezekiah's* Courtiers thus address themselves to him, because he talked in *Hebrew*. *Speak, we pray thee, to thy Servants, in the Aramean or Syrian Language, for we understand it, but talk not to us in Hebrew, least the People that is upon the Wall should hear*, 2 Kings 18. 26. It also appears out of *Daniel*, *Esdras* and *Nehemiah*, that the Chaldean Tongue was spoken at *Babylon*. *Nabuchodonosor*, *Dan.* 1. 4. commands some Youths to be chosen out of the Jewish Nobility, that were carried to *Babylon* to be instructed in the Learning and Language of the *Chaldeans*. So likewise *Jeremiah* speaks of the *Chaldeans*, Chap. 5. 15. *Behold, says the Lord, I will bring a Nation upon you from afar, O House of* Israel, *which is a powerful Nation, and an ancient Nation, a Nation whose Language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say.*

But no where do we find any like this said of those Nations that were situated between the *Mediterranean-Sea* and the *Jordan*. The Dialects of the neighbouring People were indeed easie to be distinguished from the Jewish Tongue, as *Nehemiah* particularly tells us of that of *Asdod* and some others, Chap. 13. 24. but 'tis no where affirmed, that they were not understood by the Jews.

V. Having thus shewn that Hebrew was neither the Primitive Tongue, nor preserved in the Family of *Heber*, nor yet *Abraham's* Mother-Tongue, it now remains for me to enquire

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where it was ſpoken: To give my own Opinion freely, though it is different from that of ſeveral Learned Men, who therein agree with the Jews, I ſuppoſe it was the Language of *Canaan*, and that the Poſterity of *Abraham* learnt it between the *Mediterranean-Sea* and the *Jordan*, but by no means brought it thither out of *Chaldæa*; neither can I diſcover after the ſevereſt Examination, the leaſt Abſurdity in this Opinion; for here we have a *Chaldean* remove himſelf with his whole Family into another Country, and having paſt the *Euphrates* and *Jordan*, wanders up and down *Canaan* for a hundred years, enters into Covenant with the old Inhabitants, acquires a prodigious Wealth among them, marries ſeveral Concubines, gets Children, lives in mighty Credit and Reputation, and conſequently has frequent Converſations with them. Now after all this, Can any one think it ſtrange, that he learnt a Language which has ſo great an Affinity with his own Mother-Tongue, and that his whole Family conform'd themſelves in their Speech to the Natives of the Place. Add to this, That *Iſaac* paſſed his whole, and *Jacob* the better part of his Life among them, that the Children of them both were brought up in the ſame Country, and had their Wives from thence. So that upon a due Survey of the matter, it had been a downright Miracle if they had ſtill preſerved the Chaldean Tongue, ſo little reaſon have we to wonder, that the *Canaanitiſh* Language became familiar to theſe People. And

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And therefore I look upon that Opinion to be ill grounded, which ſuppoſes that the *Iſraelites* ſpoke a different Language from the People of *Canaan*. 'Tis certain that *Iſaiah* plainly calls Hebrew the Language of *Canaan*, Chap. 19. 18. *In that day*, ſays he, *there ſhall be five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *which ſhall ſpeak the lip of* Canaan; which is all one as if he had ſaid, *the Language of* Canaan. For the word *lip*, both there, and in *Gen.* 11. 1. ſignifies *Speech*, becauſe the Lips are no leſs ſerviceable in ſpeaking, than the Tongue it ſelf.

Nor is this Opinion ſupported by bare Probability, or to be called a Conjecture merely deduced from the Name, for *Bochart*, in the ſecond Book of his *Canaan*, Chap. 1. has fully demonſtrated it to be grounded upon Truth, which we ſhall lay down before the Reader in a few words, becauſe in ſome Particulars we diſſent from that admirable Man. His firſt and ſtrongeſt Argument to prove the Language of the *Canaanites* to be the ſame with that of the *Hebrews*, is brought from the Names of Men and Places, which are purely *Hebrew*. *N. Fuller* in the fourth Book of his Miſcellanies, Chap. 4. maintains the contrary Opinion: *Though I grant*, ſays he, *all thoſe names to be purely Hebrew, yet I deny that any of them were Canaanitiſh names, or given by thoſe People; I rather believe that the old names that were impoſed by the Canaanites, the Primitive Inhabitants of that Country, were afterwards pronounced and expounded by the*

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Hebrews, who succeeded them in that Land, after the Hebrew manner. Which Hypotheſis, were it true, no Argument could be formed out of the Antediluvian Names to prove the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, and yet *Fuller* would not willingly grant this, nor indeed any of the Patrons of this Opinion. But in truth this is no better than a Chimæra, to which the Holy Scriptures give not the leaſt Countenance; for though we ſhould allow that ſome of theſe words were diſguiſed with a Hebrew Sound and Termination, yet who can imagine that all of them were ſerved after this manner, and that neither *Moſes* nor *Joſhua* ſhould in one ſingle Line inform us, that they changed all the names, before the *Iſraelites* poſſeſſed themſelves of the Land of *Canaan.* Now beſides that this is altogether Incredible and without Preſident, there are two things that demonſtrate it to be abſolutely Falſe. One is, That *Moſes* and *Joſhua* give us an account of the Alteration made in ſeveral Names, by which it appears, that this was the particular Caſe of ſome few Cities, and not common to them all. Conſult *Gen.* 23. 2. as alſo *Numb.* 32. 38. and *Joſhua* 15. 13, 14. c. 19. 47. The other is, That not only the names of thoſe Cities in the Poſſeſſion of the *Iſraelites* are of Hebrew Extraction, but alſo of the neighbouring places which they had not ſubdued, as *Gaza*, *Aſdod*, *Gath*, *Ekron*, *Aſcalon*, which belonged to the Philiſtines, *Tyrus*, *Sidon*, *Sarepta*, &c.

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The Second Argument to prove the Canaanean Original of the Hebrew Tongue is deduced hence, That though the Sacred Writers expresly tell us, that several of the neighbouring Nations were of a Language different from the *Hebrews*, yet there is not the least thing like this said of the *Canaanites*: We have already taken notice that this was frequently observed of the *Chaldeans*. The People of *Egypt* are called *Lahaz*, *Psalm* 114. 1. that is to say *Barbarous*; besides there was an Interpreter between *Joseph*, who pretended himself to be an *Egyptian*, and his Brethren, see *Gen.* 42. 23. likewise *Psal.* 81. 6. In the mean time, though the *Hebrews* maintained such frequent Correspondences with the *Canaanites*, and transacted so much Business with them from *Abraham* down to *Joshua*, yet we find not the least mention of an Interpreter passing between them.

The Third Argument arises from the very use of the Interpreter whom *Joseph* employed; for if only *Jacob*'s Family spoke Hebrew, How was it possible for *Joseph* to get an Interpreter? He could have no other but some Fugitive Servant, who would have soon known both *Joseph* and his Brethren.

The Fourth is by *Bochart*, derived from the Remainders of the Phœnician Tongue, which in the second Book of his *Canaan*, he amply demonstrates to be purely Hebrew.

We shall add a Fifth, which proceeds from the manifest Footsteps of *Paganism*, that are

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eafily to be traced in this Language. For ſince Tongues are Images of the Sentiments of our Mind, and are form'd and modell'd according to the Opinion of thoſe People that uſe them; it cannot otherwiſe happen, but that the common Speech of any Country, muſt derive a great Tincture from the received Opinions of the Inhabitants. Thus learned Criticks have obſerved, that the *Arabians* have more than five hundred names for a Lyon, more than a thouſand for a Sword, two hundred at leaſt for a Serpent, and fourſcore for Honey. The reaſon of it is, becauſe the *Arabians* uſe frequently to talk of theſe things, ſince their Country is ſo peſter'd with Lyons and Serpents, is inhabited by a Warlike People, and abounds in Honey. 'Tis an eaſie matter to obſerve both in the Greek and Latin Tongues, though we were deſtitute of all other Arguments, which are indeed innumerable, that the Greeks and Latins were of Opinion, that the Gods beheld the Actions of Mankind, and were Faithful Witneſſes of the Truth, from thoſe frequent Forms of Swearing, which they uſed ſo everlaſtingly in all their Converſations.

I will not give my ſelf the Trouble to confirm a Truth, which is ſupported by ſo many Examples, not to mention the Cuſtom of all the Modern Languages, but come immediately to the Point. The Hebrew Tongue which flouriſhed, and was for ſome time cultivated by the *Canaanites*, a People who had ſtrange Notions

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of the Divinity, and were infected with *Polytheism*, retain'd several visible Footsteps of those Errors, even after it became the Mother-Tongue of the *Hebrews*, who had quite different Sentiments. The *Phœnicians* not only believed a Plurality of Gods, but ranked several Men in the number of their Deities (as *Eusebius* tells us *Præp. Evang.* l. 1. c. 6.) and therefore more frequently made use of the word *Elohim*, which is of the Plural Number, than the Singular *Eloha* God, which we see still continued in the Hebrew Language, though they maintain'd the contrary Opinion, and were always zealous Assertors of one God. Hence it comes to pass, that sometimes they joyn a Verb in the Singular Number to it, pursuant to their own Notions of the Unity of God; and sometimes in the Plural, after the manner of their Neighbours, though they only meant one God by it, see *Gen.* 1. 1. Chap. 20. 13. and our (*e*) Annotations on those places. 'Tis also observable, that the same word *Elohim* does not only signifie the Supream God, but likewise Angels and Magistrates. The reason of which is plain, Be-

(*e*) Monsieur *le Clerk* is of opinion, that the Hebrews spoke the same Language with the Inhabitants of *Palestine*, an Idolatrous People, so they borrowed this Fashion of speaking πλεοσμῶς, *i. e.* in the Plural Number of God from them, though pursuant to their own Opinion, of the Unity of God, they attributed only a Singular Signification to a Plural word. Therefore 'tis not to be wonder'd at, that sometimes they joyn'd a singular Verb to the word *Elohim*, as *Gen.* 1. 1. as having a greater regard to the Sense of the word, than the Number of it; and at other times *ratione numeri habitâ*, add a plural Verb to it, as *Gen.* 20. 13.

cause

cause the *Phenicians* did not observe a sufficient distinction between God, Angels and Magistrates, since several Men were reputed as Gods by them. For otherwise if this Language had been invented, and cultivated by a People free from Idolatry, as the *Hebrews* afterwards were, they had neither communicated a name belonging to the Divine Nature to Creatures, nor had they used it plurally in their ordinary Discourses. 'Tis certain we have nothing like this in any of the Modern *European* Languages, nay not in the Arabick of the *Mahometans*, who profess themselves like the *Europeans*, to be invincible Adversaries to *Polytheism*.

Every one knows that the *Hebrews* inveterately hated that Opinion, which supposes the Divinity to be ἀνθρωποειδὲς, *i.e.* resembling the Humane Nature; neither is it to be imagined, that these People, who were the Worshippers of one invisible eternal God, if they had had the inventing of their own Language, would have in their common Talk so much favoured the abovementioned Opinion, from which we see most Christians now-a-days carefully abstain for the same reason. But the Holy Scriptures afford us an infinite number of Examples of this Ἀνθρωπομόρφωσιν; and *Salom. Glassius*, a most industrious and learned Writer, bestows the longest Chapter of his Sacred Rhetorick, which is the Seventh, Tract. 1. in enumerating them: And true it is, that mention is made of God's *Soul, Face, Eyes, Ears, Nose, Mouth, Neck, Arms,*

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Arms, his right and left Hand, Fingers, Heart, Bowels, Bosom and *Feet*. Nor is this all, for an observing Reader may find several other remarkable Instances of the Ἀνθρωποπαθείας upon other Occasions. We find attributed to God *Sadness, Repentance, Anger, Hatred, Jealousie, a Knowledge*, not from Eternity and constant to it self, but acquired by Experience, *Remembrance, Forgetfulness, Laughter, Noise, Labour, Vows, Going down, Rising up, Walking, Sleeping, Watching*, and several things of the like nature, which though they are said *more humano*, are yet to be understood Θεοπρεπῶς, which the abovementioned Learned Author has ingeniously remark'd, whom the Reader, if he pleases, may consult himself. These frequent Examples were formerly insisted upon, and abused by the Ἀνθρωπομορφῖται, from whose Errors nevertheless the *Hebrews* were always free, as they were from the Idolatry of their Neighbours.

Some feeble Objections may be urged against this Opinion, but they are so effectually confuted by *Bochart*, that a Man must be incurably Obstinate, who after he has read his Reasons, will still persist in the defence of them; so that since they will fall down of their own accord, if we do but remember what has been already advanced, 'tis not necessary to dwell any longer upon them. But some body perhaps will think to affright us with the Title of *Holy*, which is a Compliment the Jews have passed upon their own Language. Now if they mean

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no more by it, but that *Holy* Laws were given them by God Almighty in that Tongue, and other moſt *Holy* Revelations made by the Prophets, we have no Controverſie with them upon that Article; we grant it all, and urge it as well as they. God, if he had ſo vouchſafed, might have declared his Will in the Indian Language, but this had not conferr'd the leaſt *Sanctity* upon the Indian Letters and Accents, nor ought the Indian Tongue to have been accounted leſs Holy for its Penury and Barrenneſs. Our Saviour and his Apoſtles revealed the moſt Holy Doctrines of the Goſpel in the Galilean Tongue, which was known, but deſpiſed by thoſe of *Jeruſalem.* The Apoſtles alſo preached the Goſpel to the Gentiles in every Language, which is no leſs Holy for all that, than if they had delivered it in the ſame Tongue which *Adam* ſpoke, for that lies not in empty Sounds and Words, but in the Things and Thoughts. And 'tis perhaps out of Envy to them, that the *Rabbins* have expreſly forbid Prayers to be ſaid in any other Language but the Hebrew, nay not excepting the Syrian. *Rabbi Jochanan's* Precept in *Talmud Schab*, Fol. 12. 2. as 'tis generally known, ſo 'tis deſervedly laught at, *Whoever Prays to have his Neceſſities relieved in the Syrian Tongue, the Miniſtring Angels do not aſſiſt him, for the Miniſtring Angels do not underſtand Syriack.* 'Tis not worth the while to confute thoſe People, who believe, as the *Rabbins* do, that this is the Language of the Angels, and will

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will be that of the Juſt after the Reſurrection Thoſe that can ſo eaſily ſwallow ſuch Stuff, deſerve indeed the name of great *Opiniatres*, but are not, I believe, much affected with ſolid Reaſoning.

VI. 'Tis now high time to come to ſomething elſe, which no leſs diſagrees from the Rabbinical Opinions than the former, but is of much greater uſe in the Interpretation of the Sacred Volume. 'Tis commonly boaſted by theſe high-flyers, that the Hebrew Language is infinitely the fineſt in the World; in ſhort, they are ſo liberal in their Commendations of the Hebrew Style, that they deſpiſe all other Tongues in compariſon of that. We confeſs indeed there are ſome Beauties and Elegancies peculiar to the Hebrew Tongue, as there are to all the Tongues in the World, but at the ſame time believe it is not to be compared with others more refined and copious Languages. But before I proceed any farther, I am to inform the Reader, that it is conſider'd by us, not ſuch as perhaps it was in its flouriſhing Condition, but as we find it in the Holy Writings. I freely acknowledge that there were much more words, and a greater Variety of Phraſes uſed, than we find in this ſmall Volume; but as far as we can judge of it by its remainders, we have juſt reaſon to believe it to be a barren, ambiguous, unrefined Language, which now we ſhall endeavour to prove.

The Excellency of every Language conſiſts principally in three things, *viz.* Plenty of Words and

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and Phraſes, Perſpicuity of Speech, and Purity; the Rules for which are copiouſly laid down by thoſe that have treated of Rhetorick. Now 'tis certain that ſeveral Languages, but eſpecially the Greek, are much ſuperior to Hebrew in all theſe Conſiderations, and 'tis a plain Caſe, that Hebrew can with no Pretence be ſaid to be the fineſt Language in the World.

In the firſt place, Thoſe that attentively read over the Holy Writings, or conſult the Hebrew Lexicons, will be ſoon convinced that it has but very few Words, and very few Phraſes. There are not only the ſame words, but (what argues a miſerable Poverty) we meet with the very ſame Expreſſions every where, but eſpecially in the Hiſtorical Books. The ſame Thread of Narration, the ſame Particularities of Style and Expreſſion are viſible all along: Nor is this only obſervable of the Writers of one Age, for all the Hiſtorians of all Times and Ages, have writ exactly after the ſame manner. I would demonſtrate this Aſſertion more at large, were not moſt Men convinced of the Evidence and Truth of it: Therefore I will dwell no longer upon ſo plain a Chapter, I will only add, That the very *Rabbins*, who generally omitting the true Praiſes of their Country, ſtill affect to Honour it with their Romances and Legends, are uncontrolable Witneſſes of the Poverty of their own Language, ſince for the Interpretation of the Law, they are obliged to coin innumerable Words for the preſent Occaſion, or elſe to fetch

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fetch them out of the Syro-Chaldaick and other Languages: And in these the Talmudical Books abound, and without them they could never be able to deliver or express their own meaning. Every one knows that there are at least ten times more words in *Buxtorf's Rabbinical Thesaurus*, than in his *Bible-Lexicon*. Nevertheless, with all their Foreign Assistance, this *Copia Rabbinica* falls infinitely short of the Græcian and Latin Treasures.

If we enquire into the Cause of the great Sterility of the Hebrew Language, we shall find it to be the same as has been observed of other Languages. Where Arts and Sciences lie under Contempt, and few Treatises are written, there must of necessity be a great want of words to express several things; for Men never impose Names on things or the Notions of the Mind, of which they never think, dispute, or write. For example, Before the Greeks diligently cultivated Philosophy, there were a thousand things of which Men never thought, and for expressing of which they had wanted fit words, if they had not coin'd new ones. The same thing befel the *Romans*, when they first began to treat of Philosophical Subjects in Latin. *I call these things Qualities*, says *Cicero*, l. 1. c. 7. Acad. quæst. *which the Greeks call* Ποιότητας, *which very Term among the Greeks is not used by the Vulgar, but only by Philosophers, and several Instances there are of the like nature. The Logicians too have their particular by-words which*

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the People do not understand, and this Method is common to all Arts: For either new words are to be coin'd, or else they are to be borrow'd from elsewhere; and if the Greeks follow this Conduct, who have for so many Ages exercised themselves in these Affairs, How much more Lawful is it for us to do it, who but now begin to treat of them? By this Instance, which may be back'd with several Arts unknown to the *Hebrews*, 'tis easie to perceive how great a Penury of words they must unavoidably labour under. As they were in a particular manner ignorant in Grammar, Rhetorick, and the whole Circle of Philosophy, as appears by their Writings, they must consequently be destitute of all those great Assistances that those Arts use to furnish. Poetry indeed, as far as the Genius of their Language would permit, was cultivated somewhat better by them; several things are majestically and beautifully said in their Songs, but yet so as to convince every impartial Reader, rather what they might have done, if they had used the same Application with other Nations, than what Perfection of Eloquence they had already acquired.

Secondly, Want of words begot Ambiguity, for when we are destitute of proper Terms to explain our meanings by, we must wrest them into another Sence, or else express particular things in words common to several more. *For Metaphors*, as *Cicero* well observes, *l.* 3. *de Orat. c.* 38. *are like borrowing, where what a Man has not of his own, he supplies himself with elsewhere.* Now

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Now if one and the ſame word ſignifies ſeveral things, one in its proper Acceptation, the reſt in a borrow'd or tralatitious Sence, 'tis no eaſie matter to diſtinguiſh its ſeveral Significations, and when Particulars are called by common Names, it often happens that we do not clearly underſtand, in what reſpect they differ from other things of the ſame Genus. For inſtance, *Erets* ſignifies among the Hebrews *Clay* that Veſſels are made of, a *Tract of Ground* either more or leſs ſuitable to the preſent Occaſion, the whole *Globe* of the Earth, and the *Men* that inhabit it; ſo that 'tis hard to ſay, which is its proper Signification, and which Figurative. When an univerſal Deſignation is fixed upon this word, which is expreſs'd by *chol*, *All*, 'tis doubted whether the whole Kingdom, or a leſs compaſs of Ground, or the Globe of the Earth, or whether all Men, or only ſome, are to be underſtood by it; ſo that nothing but the Context, or the Nature of the thing in debate, can aſſiſt our Conjectures. When figurative Words and Phraſes cannot be ſo urged, as fully to expreſs the things they deſcribe, how far they may be urged without an Error, is often doubtful.

Now if we conſider the various Significations of the indeclinable Particles, and how almoſt all the Tenſes are confounded in the Verbs, and add to this their everlaſting change of the Gender, Number and Perſon, of which ſubject abundance of Learned Men have written carefully, we ſhall have no great reaſon to boaſt of the Perſpicuity

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of the Hebrew Tongue. Read but over *Chr. Noldius*'s Concordance of the Particles, and *Glassius*'s *Grammatica Sacra*, two well approved and excellent Treatises, and when that is done, I believe the most obstinate Man will be convinced, that perhaps no Language in the World is fuller of Ambiguity and Obscurity than the Hebrew.

But yet I would not be so understood, as if a General Scheme of the Jewish Religion and History could not be had out of the Books of the Old Testament; for as that is not of it self obscure, the chief Matters relating to it are so frequently inculcated, that by virtue of those Repetitions, they are made plain enough. Besides we do not every where meet Ambiguities and Reasons to doubt, though 'tis certain there are but too many of them. Hence it is that nothing belonging to the Religion or History of the *Israelites* in general, has been called in question, though infinite. Disputes have happened among the Learned, concerning some particular Circumstances, and other abstruser Matters, which are never to be decided by any Light of the Understanding, or any Application of Mind. Our Commentary all along abounds with such sort of Questions, wherein we cannot pretend to state Matter of Fact, but only deliver what we think our selves, and what others before us have conjectured; for there are infinite places so unaccountably perplext, that 'tis easie to demonstrate the Impossibility of finding out the genuine

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genuine Meaning of them, and every Person that has but a competent Knowledge of these Matters, will be soon sensible of this Truth, if he does but carefully consider it. For this reason those Persons that pretend to be influenced by the Truth, and not by a Party, will not easily condemn another for his Opinion, provided it does not hurt the Sum and Substance of the Book. But this is not a place to talk of these Matters.

In the Third place this sufficiently shews, that the Hebrew Language was never cultivated with any extraordinary care, for as the Culture of Ground has this end, to procure Plenty of wholsome Fruits for the Tiller, so are Languages for no other design cultivated, but that Men may have plenty of words to serve them upon all Occasions, and withal a Perspicuity of Oration, without which the greatest Plenty is useless. For certainly the end of Speaking, is not to amuse or tire our Hearers with multiplicity of words, but that we may be understood, and by the Mediation of Speech, to convey our Thoughts into the Minds of others.

Now the *Hebrews* not only neglected Grammar, and those other Arts and Disciplines that help to enrich a Language in words, but were utterly unacquainted with Rhetorick that serves to refine them. Upon this account they every where trample upon the Rules of the *Rhetors*, even those that do not depend upon the changeable Wills of Men, but are built upon the evet-

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laſting Rules of Reaſon, and ought to have the ſame Authority all the World over. No body doubts but that Clearneſs is one of the greateſt Happineſſes any Tongue can boaſt of, ſince innumerable Miſtakes may ariſe from words not rightly underſtood, which are not only troubleſome in the common Offices of Life, but extreamly dangerous in Matters of greater Conſequence. But the *Hebrews*, as we find, never took any great Pains to render their Language Perſpicuous.

If 'tis not, it ought at leaſt to be a Matter of Commendation among all People, neither to uſe fewer words than are neceſſary to make a Man underſtood, nor more than are requiſite, eſpecially in a ſimple Narration, that ſo our Hearers may fully comprehend our meaning. *A Narration*, ſays *Cicero*, who was not only an admirable Orator, but a great Maſter of Speaking, *lib* 1. *de Inv. cap.* 20. *ought to have three Qualifications, it ought to be Conciſe, Clear, and Probable.* We ſhall not meddle with the two laſt, as having already treated of Perſpicuity, and becauſe a Diſpute about Probability is impertinent here, but let us ſee what he ſays of Brevity. *'Twill be ſhort*, ſays he, *if we begin no higher than the preſent occaſion demands, and do not ramble into far-fetch'd Stories; and if we relate a thing in General, without mentioning every little Particular; for, generally ſpeaking, 'tis enough to ſay ſuch a thing was done, without deſcending into the Circumſtances, and if we proceed*

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no farther in the Story than things are worth knowing: And if we do not make Digreſſions into Foreign Matters: And if we ſo ſpeak, that from what is already ſaid, the Reader may ſometimes gueſs at what is not ſaid: And if we not only omit whatever is deſtructive of Perſpicuity, but alſo whatever neither hinders nor helps it: And if every thing is only told once, and if we do not begin with that where we left off laſt. Though theſe Rules are agreeable to Reaſon, yet the Jews neglected them, as might be proved by a thouſand Inſtances if there was occaſion for it, which the attentive Reader will eaſily diſcover in our Annotations. Unleſs we carry this along with us, while we ſtrive to accommodate the Hebrew Hiſtories to the Precepts of Rhetorick, we ſpoil all, and do not underſtand what they mean. They are frequently defective in what is neceſſary, and abound in Superfluities; both which, unleſs they are ſupplied, or elſe are known to be redundant, 'tis impoſſible to underſtand them. An Emphaſis is urged where there is none at all, and when any thing is omitted in a Narration, though 'tis by no means Rhetorical, that they'll tell you, againſt all Senſe and Reaſon, ought not to be underſtood. Hence ariſe thoſe angry Wars between the Interpreters, and bold Decrees paſs concerning the Sence of ſome ambiguous places, which 'tis a mortal Sin to endeavour afterwards to revoke. Hence proceed Anger and Hatred, and all thoſe Miſchiefs which Theological Quarrels uſually draw after them.

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There is another Rule likewise which is frequently neglected in the Narrations of the Hebrews, and yet is not undeservedly commended by the Skillful in Rhetorick. As we have already seen, they not only advise us to make the Narration as clear as we can, but also Methodical and Open, *That what is first transacted be first related, and the Series of Things and Times so preserved, that Matters be told exactly as they were done.* How Religiously the *Hebrews* have follow'd this Rule, let only the Book of *Genesis* declare for them, the good Order of which History will raise a thousand insuperable Difficulties, if we do not remember that the Jews were no Slaves to the Regularities of Time and Action. Thus what is said concerning the Dispersion of the Nations in the tenth Chapter, ought to be placed after the ninth Verse of the eleventh Chapter. The third, fourth, fifth and eighth Verses of the eleventh Chapter are likewise Inversions of the Narrations, as also the 23d Verse of the 24th Chapter. See the Notes on Chap. 20. 2. Chap. 36. 6. Chap. 34. 1. and what we have remark'd in the Chronological Tables on this place.

If from these Observations that respect intire Sentences, and the due ordering of them, we pass to single Words and single Locutions, we shall find the Precepts of Rhetorick no less neglected there. But at present we will only content our selves to produce two or three Instances of words used in a Figurative Sence. And here,

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as the Rhetoricians tell us, *All Disparity is to be avoided*, because every Metaphor is, or ought to be, grounded upon some likeness. Upon which Score neither the *Romans*, nor the *Grecians*, instead of *to occasion a Dearth*, durst have said *to break the Staff of Bread*. Which Expression being not rightly understood, has made very Learned Men fall into strange Mistakes, as we shall shew in a proper place.

Because, as the Masters of Eloquence observe, *the chief Excellence of a word figuratively applied, consists in making a greater Impression upon the Sense; therefore all gross sordid Images are carefully to be avoided, that may nauseate the Hearer.* Therefore by this Rule it was not lawful to say, That *God was a War-like Man*, That *he was rouzed up like a Sleeper*, and *like a valiant Man, who after he has slept out his Wine, cries aloud.* And several other Expressions of the like nature.

I will instance in no more, for these are sufficient to convince the most prejudiced Reader, that the Hebrew Language is extreamly Rude and Impolite. But before I dismiss this Article, I must inform him of two things, and then take my Farewel of it. The First is, That we by no means pretend to deny, that the Hebrew Writings are here and there imbellish'd with extraordinary Sentences, and that there are many sublime Passages, but especially among the Prophets. But this is not enough to give a Language the Denomination of Polite, since no Tongue in the World can arrive to a sufficient

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Perfection of Purity, without a long and laborious Application to Grammar and Rhetorick for ſome Ages at leaſt. A Book ought to obſerve from the beginning to the end of it, all or moſt of the Rules of Elocution and Order, to make it paſs for an elegant and regular Compoſition. For as *Pliny* ſays, *l.* 3. *Ep.* 13. *Even the* Barbarians *now and then invent finely, and diſcourſe magnificently, but none but learned Perſons can diſpoſe things fitly, and paint them with an agreeable Variety.*

The other is, That whatever has been hitherto ſaid by us concerning the Hebrew Tongue, has only a relation to the Words and Stile, as the People commonly uſed them, but not to the things themſelves that were revealed by God to the Jewiſh Prophet, and by them communicated to the World. No ſound Chriſtian ever denied that theſe things were always of the greateſt Moment, and ſometimes to be above the reach of Humane Underſtanding. But though God Almighty diſcover'd them to us by the Jews, yet he permitted them to uſe ſuch a Stile as was moſt Familiar to themſelves and their own Country-men: For the Spirit, by which they were influenced, by a wonderful Condeſcention, accommodated himſelf to the received Cuſtoms of their Language. Hence it comes to paſs, that the Apoſtles deliver'd the Doctrine of Chriſt not in an Attick Stile, or with *Plato's* Elcquence, but after their own way ſuitable to the People, for though they were Divinely

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vinely inſpir'd, yet they were but indifferently skill'd in Humane Learning, as we are told by St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 1. and elſewhere. And herein the Divine Wiſdom manifeſtly appears, that theſe Heavenly Truths ſhould be reveal'd to, and, for ſeveral Ages, preſerved by a Barbarous unlearned People, as the Greeks called them, and yet not the leaſt tittle of them be known to thoſe Nations that were in full Poſſeſſion of all Arts and Sciences. That this was not done raſhly, but purſuant to the Will of God Almighty, St. *Paul* teaches us, Ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾖ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει Θεοῦ. But this *en paſſant*, leaſt any Cenſorious Reader ſhould imagine, that we confound Divine and Humane things together; but to carry on this Argument as it deſerves, would take up a greater ſpace than the narrow limits of this Diſſertation will allow.

VII. As long as the Jewiſh Government ſtood, and the People kept unmixt from other Nations, we may probably ſuppoſe they preſerv'd the Strength and Purity of their Language; ſo that from *Moſes* down to *Eſdras*, it receiv'd no ſenſible Alterations. For while they were not debauch'd with the Manners of their Neighbours, conſequently they made no change in their Writings; by which means their Language might have been extreamly alter'd, even whilſt it was inrich'd and poliſh'd, which we know was the Fate of the Latin Tongue. And therefore 'tis not ſtrange if we obſerve little or no difference of Stile in the Sacred Hiſtorians. But

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But after that the Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, as well as the other Ten, were carried into Captivity, and those that went not beyond the *Euphrates*, were scatter'd up and down the Neighbourhood, among Nations that spoke different Dialects of the *Canaanitish* Tongue: When the Jews, I say, after Seventy years, return'd into *Judea* at last out of several Countries, their Language could not avoid being vitiated with a mixture of other Dialects. *At that time*, says *Nehemiah* 13. 23. *I saw Jews, that took to them Wives from* Asdod, Hammon *and* Moab, and their Children spoke one half (*Hbatsi*) in the Speech of *Asdod*, and knew not *to speak* pure *Hebrew: And thus they spoke after the Tongues of several People: Nehemiah* indeed expresly tells us, he prohibited such Marriages, but 'twas not in his power to hinder the Jewish Language from being corrupted by that mixture: Nay, those that came from *Chaldea* no less introduced *Chaldaisms*. In following Ages, when infinite numbers of Jews not only lived in *Judea*, but in the neighbouring Nations, as *Syria*, *Egypt*, nay, and in remoter places, and yearly visited *Jerusalem* upon the Score of their Religion, it must of necessity follow, that not only those that lived out of *Judea*, but even the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, that daily convers'd with these Strangers, and married among them, must strangely adulterate their Language. So that at last, instead of the true genuine Hebraism, there sprung a *Syro-Chaldean* Mixture, as appears by the

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words of that Language that are to be found in the New Testament, not to mention now the Dialect of the *Talmud*.

As other Writers have demonstrated these Matters more copiously, and a *detail* of Particulars is not our business here, I will only observe, that within some Ages after their return from the Captivity, the old Hebrew, as we find it in the Sacred Writings, was no longer the Mother-Tongue of the Jews, and therefore those that had a mind to be Masters of it, were obliged to study and peruse the Holy Volumes. Now though they had no more Hebrew Books than we have at present, yet in this matter they were much Happier than we, because the Tongue they spoke, had so great an Affinity with the ancient Hebrew, and therefore was no small help towards the attaining it. For this reason we find, that the Seventy Interpreters have (*f*) explained several obscure words out of *Chaldee*, or *Arabick*, rather than the Hebrew Books, where sometimes they are extant but once, or are read in a different Sence.

But now if we consider the lamentable Condition of the Jewish Republick, on every side

(*f*) I shall give two Instances of it. They have translated *Gen.* 1. 6. *Rakiah*, στερεωμα, Firmament, and not *expansus*, as most of the later Interpreters have done; following the Signification of the word *Rakah*, which in *Syriack* denotes the same as *firmare*, *comprimere*. Thus also *Gen.* 3. 15. where we after the Hebrew have render'd it, *He shall bruise thy head*; the Sept. have translated it αυτος σε τηρησει κεφαλην, *He shall observe thy head*. E. Castell remarks, That this Root in the *Arabick* signifies *observare*, *speculare*: To which the LXX might have an Eye.

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oppreſs'd, and over-run by the Kings of *Syria* and *Egypt* for many years, we ſhall find they had no opportunity to apply themſelves to the Study of Grammar: And indeed ſome Learned Men, after a careful Examination of the Septuagint Verſion, which was publiſh'd in thoſe times, have long ago concluded that they neither had any certain fixt Grammar, or Gloſſary, or Lexicon of the Hebrew Tongue: For they frequently violate all the Laws of Grammar, and in the tranſlating of unuſual words, the meaning of which is not to be gather'd from the Context, they are ſo ſtrangely put to it, that it plainly appears they were not led by Grammar Rules, had no certain Knowledge of the true Signification of words, but gueſs'd and conjectur'd as well as they could, and ſo blunder'd right or wrong through all the difficult places. I am not ignorant that *Iſaac Voſſius*, and ſome other Perſons, who never gave themſelves the trouble, I ſuppoſe, to compare it with the Hebrew Original, endeavour to defend this Tranſlation, and ſay 'tis in many places corrupted by the Negligence or Boldneſs of the Tranſcribers, where there's an evident Miſtake in the Tranſlating a Hebrew Word. But thoſe that examine this Verſion diligently, will ſoon perceive the contrary; nor indeed is it credible, that it was every where almoſt corrupted in the obſcure places, to omit a hundred other things that may be ſaid againſt ſo precarious an Hypotheſis.

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In thoſe, and the following Ages, down to the time of the * *Maſorites*, *A.D 494.
though Jews ſeem wholly to have employed themſelves in the Study of Allegories and Rites, but not of Philological Learning; which was the reaſon that they look'd upon this Tranſlation, which is far from being perfect, not only as the moſt exact thing of that nature in the whole World, but as Divinely Inſpir'd. See the Hiſtory of *Ariſteus*, *Philo* in his Book *de Vitâ Moſis*, and *Joſephus Jud. Ant.* l. 12. c. 2. No ſurer an Argument can be given, how far the old Hebrew was neglected in thoſe times, than their blind Admiration of theſe Interpreters, who (to ſpeak impartially) are rather to be pardon'd, than commended for their Performance.

In the mean time we do not ſay this, as if we thought that Tranſlation to be of little uſe. On the other hand, we always believed it to be extreamly Serviceable, provided we help the Unaccuracy and defect of Method in the Interpreters with Grammar Rules, and the aſſiſtance of correct Lexicons. As their Authority ought not to over-weigh Grammar-Reaſons, that are deduced from the immemorial Cuſtom of any Tongue; ſo where Grammar does not contradict, and where the Sence allows, it ought to be in great Eſteem with us. The Opinions of that Age, which aroſe perhaps from ſome ancient Tradition, nay, even Conjectures that are ſupported by the uſe of the *Syro-Chaldaïc* Language, then in its flouriſhing Condition, are by no

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no means to be dis-regarded by such as are well skill'd in the Sacred Philology.

But as in those things they are much superior to us, so we mightily exceed them in Method; for since we have most accurate Grammars, and follow fixt establish'd Rules, we no longer unriddle the Construction of a Sentence by guessing, nor are we carried up and down by uncertain Conjectures, as we may observe the Ancients were. We have likewise several Lexicons compiled, from all places of Scriptures compared together, by most Learned Men, and Concordances wherein are all the words in the Bible, and the places where they are to be found, most accurately set forth; by which Assistances we are now able more certainly to discover the various Signification of words, and with more Reason to defend them. Nor have we only very large Glossaries of the Hebrew Tongue, but likewise of the neighbouring Languages, as *Chaldee*, *Syriack* and *Arabick*, and out of these can we more conveniently compare these Tongues with one another, than those that lived in the days of the Seventy Interpreters.

Of what prodigious Advantage a certain Method, made up of immutable Rules, is, may for instance sake be soon known from the Latin and Greek Tongues. In *Cicero's* time the Greek Tongue flourish'd in *Greece* and *Asia*; he not only learnt it at *Rome*, but in *Greece* it self, and both writ and spoke Greek not amiss. Who would believe now, that in any of his Translations out of

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of Greek, any Paſſages could drop from him that are liable to Cenſure? Yet for all this, ſome Learned Men have diſcovered ſeveral Miſtakes in him, and the reaſon is, becauſe he acquired the Greek Tongue rather by Cuſtom than Rules; for which conſult *H. Stephens's Lexicon Ciceronianum*. Nay what is more, do not we ſee that *Cicero* and *Varro*, the moſt Learned of the *Romans*, have committed ſuch miſerable Miſtakes, even in the Derivations of the Latin Tongue, that we are aſhamed of them? For though the Latin was their Mother-Tongue, and they daily took pains to learn Greek, yet they were altogether Ignorant of the Etymologick Art, and therefore committed unaccountable Errors. The caſe of the LXX Interpreters is the ſame, for being wholly Strangers to our Grammatical and Critical way of Interpretation, they often miſtake, and unexpectedly fall into thoſe Errors, which we may eaſily avoid.

VIII. If what I have advanced concerning Philological Learning being little minded by the Jews under the ſecond Temple be true, as it evidently appears by what has been already ſaid, and might be made out by many more Arguments, we may probably ſuſpect that the Holy Volumes were not always tranſcribed with that Exactneſs and Care by the Copyiſts then, as they deſerved. 'Tis certain the LXX Interpreters, whoever they were, which 'tis not our buſineſs now to enquire, ſeem to have made uſe of a very faulty Manuſcript, and ſometimes were not able to

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to guess the *ductus literarum*, as Learned Men have long ago observed. I own indeed, that all the various Lections, which may be collected in their Translation, are not owing to a vitious Manuscript, and that several of them perhaps ought to be imputed to their Conjectures. As (*b*) *Gen.* 2. 2. Chap. 8. 4, 7. and in abundance of other places: But then that very liberty they assume to themselves of guessing, is a plain Demonstration that it was not generally believed at that time, that the Copies were free from Faults, since they were supposed to stand in need of Correction so often.

Besides we find that the Book which the *Masorites* made use of, and was of venerable Antiquity without question, has frequently faults in the * *Chetib*, which are amended in the † *Keri*, and which are often wanting in the *Samaritan* Copy. As for instance the ה *Finalis*, which is to be found in the *Samaritan*, is often omitted in the word *Naharah*, *a Girl*, which ought not to be left out; and *hi* is frequently read for *hou*, which (generally speaking) is amended in the *Samaritan* Book. 'Tis true, these and some others of the like nature, are but small inconsiderable Mistakes,

* Text. † Margin.

(*b*) In the second Chapter of *Genesis* v. 2. the Hebrew reads it *On the seventh day God ended his Work*; but the Septuagint, *On the sixth day*. And so *Gen.* 8. 4. the Hebrew is, *The Ark rested on the seventeenth day of the month*; but the LXX say, *The twenty seventh day of the month*; and below v. 7. in the Hebrew, 'tis *the Raven went forth and returned*; but the LXX insert a Negation, οὐκ ἀπέστρεψεν, *he did not return*.

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however they shew that Mistakes might creep in, and indeed did creep into the Text, and if they did it in a word so common and easie as *Naharah*, certainly they would much sooner do so in an obscure, difficult, and rare word, especially where the Sence was abrupt, and the Series of the Oration did not help out the Transcribers, who did not understand it.

Nevertheless, because the Books of the Law were more frequently read than any of the rest, and are more easie to be understood, I must own there were but few Faults in them, and those of small Importance: And moreover that our Copy, I mean that of the *Masorites*, seems to be more Correct than the *Samaritan*, for which reason I have all along Faithfully set it down, not so much as changing a Letter. As I hinted above, some Faults are left by the *Masorites*, which might have been amended, but 'tis better, in my Opinion, that those very Faults should be left in the Copy, than that it should smell too much of a Critical hand, which I have often observed in the *Samaritan*, though it is not without its Faults, as Learned Men have long since taken notice.

After all, to deliver my own Sentiments, upon a serious Examination of the whole Matter, I am clearly of opinion that no Books of great Antiquity, have arrived to our hands so correct as are the Holy Writings of the *Hebrews*, although 'tis certain they are much the oldest of any; I mean those that were copied out by the Diligence of the *Masorites*, and so transmitted to

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Posterity. And that this did not happen without a particular Providence, which has hitherto so miraculously preserved the Sacred Histories, and the Revelations of the Prophets, for the common Benefit and Use of Mankind, no Man is better satisfied than my self. I have likewise frequently in this Book defended the common Readings against the Conjectures of Learned Men, as any one may see that will peruse my Annotations. At the same time I freely own, that the most indefatigable and judicious *Lud. Cappel*, has infinitely deserved of the Sacred Learning, by his *Critica Sacra*, and *Arcanum Punctuationis*. To speak ingenuously, most of his Opinions do extreamly please me, and I have set them down as if they had been so many Demonstrations. But since I was obliged to chuse one certain Edition to follow, and that the most accurate, I have only followed the Masoritick Copy in my Translation, as being the most correct of all, and yet I have not neglected to set down in my Commentary, all the various Lections out of the *Samaritan*, and the Ancient Interpreters, that seem'd to be of any Moment. But I shall say more of this Matter in the following Dissertation.

Disserta-

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Dissertation II.

Of the best Manner of Interpreting the Bible.

I. *The End of this Dissertation.* II. *What it is to Interpret, and the Principal Heads of that Method which we have follow'd.* III. *How Difficult a Matter it is to Interpret the Holy Writings.* IV. *What seems the best way to attempt it.* V. *Hebraisms, after what manner they are to be translated.* VI. *The Difficulty of turning the Hebrew Particles into Latin.* VII. *What trouble there is in a Narration that consists of Preterperfect or Future Tenses joyn'd together by the Conjunction* Vau. VIII. *The* Masorite *Copy to be follow'd as the most correct.* IX. *What Assistances are to be had out of the Old and Modern Interpreters.* X. *What helps the neighbouring Languages afford.* XI. *Of what great use the comparing of several places of Scripture is.* XII. *What helps may be safely borrowed from Etymologies.* XIII. *That the Errors of some later Interpreters may be more easily avoided now than in the last Age.*

SINCE after the Labours of so many Learned Men, who both in this, and especially the last Age, have endeavoured to Interpret the

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Holy Scriptures, 'tis my Lot also to undertake the same Province; I think it but necessary to acquaint the Reader upon what Motives I attempted, and after what manner I have perform'd it. I am sensible that I have engaged not only in a very difficult, but a most invidious Affair, by reason of the different Parties and Factions that disturb the Repose of the Christian World. For in a Business of this nature, if a Man does not do something singular to distinguish him from the rest, he must expect to meet with the Contempt and Laughter of the Learned and Unlearned, and if he advances any thing unheard of, and untouch'd before, (which I dare presume to say is no easie matter) for his Recompense he's sure to incurr the Hatred and Malice of the World, especially as 'tis manag'd by the Divines now a-days. Nevertheless after I had seriously revolv'd all this in my Mind, I was at last determin'd by the Authority of *Philo Judæus*, who after he has commended the Divine Volumes of *Moses* as they deserve, and shown what a Fatigue and Trouble his Interpreters must expect, ἃ μὲν, says he, διὰ τὸ πονικώτερον, &c. *Yet we must not therefore desist, but for the sake of Piety, strive to say something above our Power, and advance as far as 'tis lawful for Humane Minds to aspire, that are possess'd with the Love and desire of Wisdom.* In the beginning of his Book Περὶ κοσμοποιΐας.

Having therefore with God's Assistance, as I hope, undertaken this difficult Affair, I have all along

along endeavour'd neither to diſguſt the Nice Reader with any nauſeous Repetitions, nor diſoblige the Lovers of Antiquity with any new Doctrines. After what manner I have accompliſh'd it, I deſign to lay open in this Diſſertation as plainly as I can; but firſt of all I ſhall ſhew with what Difficulties I ſtruggled, and by what means I was able to overcome them; and in this Age particularly better than could be done in the laſt; not that we pretend to a greater ſhare of Judgment, but becauſe we have much better helps now to enable us to ſurmount them.

II. Before we come to the Interpretation of the Holy Books, 'twill be neceſſary to remind the Reader as briefly as we can, what is meant by the word *Interpret*, for we do not here deſign to deliver all the Rules of that Art. Now ſince they that ſpeak, make uſe of certain Words or Forms of Speaking, in order to be underſtood by others, and to raiſe the ſame Motions and Affections of the Mind in their Hearers as they feel themſelves; thoſe may be ſaid to interpret other Mens words, (if we take the word in a large Acceptation) who ſo expreſs them in another Tongue, that they who hear the Interpreter ſpeak, think altogether the ſame things, in the very ſame order and manner, as the Perſon that ſpoke firſt would have them. If all Languages were equally Copious, and furniſh'd with words of the ſame Force and Energy, we might ſafely then render Word for Word, and Phraſe for Phraſe, and conſequently we ſhould only have

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occasion for a literal simple Translation. But since Languages do not answer one another so exactly, 'tis impossible to make a Verbal Translation if the Narration is somewhat long. Many things must of necessity be explain'd in fewer or more words, as the occasion demands, if the Interpreter has a mind to be understood, and to gain that Point in the Minds of his Hearers, as he whose Interpreter he is desires he should. Nay sometimes though we increase or diminish the number of words, yet the same Notion cannot be express'd in two Languages, by reason of the Diversity of the Idiom. An infinite number of Words and Expressions, whether Figurative or proper, are so peculiar to their own Tongues, that they can by no means be transfused into another, without a long and troublesome Circumlocution, which cannot be inserted into a Translation.

From hence 'tis easie to conclude, That no Translation can be in all Respects compleat, that is to say, such a Translation, that after the perusing of it, the Reader shall think the very same things, and be affected after the same manner, as if he understood the Language out of which the Version was made, and was able to draw for himself out of the Original Fountain. And as this holds certainly true in all Languages in the World, so 'tis most sensibly perceiv'd in the Latin Translations of the Hebrew Books, by reason of the vast Disagreement between the Hebrew and Latin Tongues, as we shall more fully

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fully demonstrate below. We know indeed that the ancient Jews and Christians, who were ignorant of the Hebrew Tongue, thought the Greek Version of the Old Testament, but especially that of the Pentateuch, commonly said to be done by the LXX Interpreters, to be the most absolute thing in its kind that ever was, Ἐάν τε Χαλδαῖοι τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν γλῶτταν, ἐάν τε Ἕλληνες τὴν Χαλδαίων ἀναδιδαχθῶσι, &c. *Whether the Chaldeans learn the Greek Tongue, or the Greeks the Chaldean Tongue, and light upon both Scriptures, the Chaldean, and that into which it is translated, they admire and adore them as Sisters, or rather as one and the same both in words and things; not content to call them Interpreters, but Prophets, and Revealers of heavenly things, that happily expressed the genuine Thoughts of* Moses *with a most pure Spirit.* These are *Philo's* words in his Book *de Vitâ Mosis*, which we could heartily wish were as true as they are remote from Truth. We should then have the best and surest Interpreters of *Moses*, and the exemplar of a perfect Translation, which they were very far from obliging the World with.

But since 'tis evident that, what *Philo* pretends was done by the LXX Interpreters, is impossible to be performed, by reason of the great difference of Languages, as it has been already observed, we did not therefore attempt to translate the Old Testament, because we hoped that those who were only well skill'd in Latin, might be able, after the reading of our Translation, to

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reach the meaning of the Prophets, as well as those that understand Hebrew, and hear them speak in their own Native Tongue; we thought 'twas enough to aspire towards it, as far as the most different Idioms of the two Languages would give us leave; and since without taking too great a liberty, we could not bend the Hebrew Phrase to the Genius of the Latin Tongue, we often expres'd the Hebraisms Word for Word, especially such as the Christian World has been long accustom'd to, or whenever we did not certainly understand the meaning of any place. Of which more hereafter.

But because the Hebrew Phrases, and manner of Expression, being different from all others, would give a great deal of Trouble to those that are only acquainted with Latin, we have added a plain Paraphrase more suited to the nature of that Tongue; by the reading of which, if they cannot attain to the very words of *Moses*, yet since we have in the same order expres'd that in Latin, which *Moses* did in Hebrew, they will in some measure comprehend his Sense, and not as I imagine, deviate much from the true meaning of the Text. By this means what we were not able to compass by one single Version, perhaps we may perform by the help of the Paraphrase.

But after all, we thought we should not fully satisfie the Curiosity, if not of the most Learned, yet of those who were not altogether Strangers to Hebrew, if we did not in our Annotations explain the Hebraisms, Opinions, Customs, Rites,

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the Allusions to them, and the nature of places, as far as we could arrive to the knowledge of them, and give an account of our whole Translation and Paraphrase. Thus in our Paraphrase we have in a few words shewn what our Opinion was; and in our Annotations more at large why we were of that Opinion: Nevertheless there is something in the Paraphrase, which is not always to be found in our Annotations; for in the former, the Reader will discover the Connexion and Series of the whole Oration, which for brevity sake we could not always attend in our Comments. Besides we have observ'd both by our own and the Experience of others, that especially in difficult Books, notwithstanding the Annotations of Learned Men upon every word, the Contexion was very often obscure, so that though all the words were well enough understood, yet the Force and Order of the reasoning did not appear. Therefore we thought our selves obliged to obviate this Inconvenience by making a continued Paraphrase, after the Example of several judicious * Authors. Which Contrivance, if it does not seem altogether so necessary in Historical Writings, as some who have not duly consider'd the Matter may imagine; yet the great Usefulness of it will at least appear in the *Hagiographa* as they are call'd, and the Books of the Prophets. However I dare without Vanity affirm, that several, who after they have read the Translation, think they under-

* As the Learned Publishers of the Books in *usum Delphini* have generally done.

understand the Series of the Oration well enough, will, if they cast their Eyes on our Paraphrase, even in the Historical Books, confess that they miss'd several things, which they fancied they understood very well. But I had rather the Reader should be convinced of this Truth, by the perusal of our Work, than by our own Boasting.

In our Annotations we have only endeavoured to open and illustrate that which is called the *Grammatical*, and by the School-men the *Literal* Sence. We have there laid down no Theological or Theoretical, no Moral or Practical Conclusions, as well because it would have too much swell'd the bulk of the Work, as because after the Grammatical Sence is once fully understood, 'tis the easiest matter in the World to find out the Theoretical or Practical Doctrines, especially to those that have read any Systems of Divinity or Morality. We have also meddled with no Theological Controversies, because it was not our Intention to gratifie this or that Party, but (what all good Christians ought to agree in) the lovers of the Holy Scriptures and of the Truth. As for those Persons that take a delight to know these Squabbles, which it were better for the Interest of Mankind that they were extinguish'd, they may have Books and Comments more than enough, written merely to gratifie a Faction, and these they may turn over at their leisure.

Perhaps some People will censure me, that I have not handled every thing more *like a Divine*, but

but let them know, whoever they be, that I purposely left that Province, to be manag'd by their sublimer Wits. We might indeed be justly blamed, if we omitted any thing we promised to perform, but since it was never in our Thoughts, as we have solemnly affirm'd, to retail Theological Dogma's, it would be hard measure to condemn us for what we never promised. Nay, they have our leave to despise these our Performances in comparison of Theological and abstruser Contemplations. We'll not disown, if they please, that we did not penetrate into the obscure meaning of the Holy Writers, that lurks under the *Cortex Grammaticus*. Let us be thought to understand no more in the Sacred Books of the *Hebrews*, than *the Authors were willing the People should understand*, which *Antonius* in *Cicero*, speaking of the *Græcian* Learning, frankly owns of himself. If we have been able to attain but to this small Pittance every where, we shall mightily congratulate our selves, and others of vulgar Understanding, to whose Apprehension this was suited.

But as we had often occasion to doubt, whether our Conjectures were right, and could not make out the meaning clear enough by the help of Grammar and Criticism alone, or else several meanings of equal Probability offered themselves: The Reader may observe, that both in our Paraphrase and Commentary, we use a doubtful and no Dogmatical Stile, and perhaps he will there discover frequenter Reasons for suspending his

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his Opinion, than in most Writings of this nature. But since every Man Believes and Doubts for himself, I must inform those Learned Gentlemen that have a greater insight in these Matters, that I write for my self, and such as stand upon the same level, and may they hug themselves with the sweet Contemplation, that they know more than their Neighbours. Least we should betray any one into Mistakes, we made a scruple to assert some things positively, when neither by the assistances of others, nor by our own Endeavours, we were able to fix any certain Judgment: However it does not follow, that People do not invent, because they do not affirm. As we vastly disagree from the Opinion of those Persons, who believe that nothing can be made out in Scripture, with the help of Grammar alone, unless Tradition comes in for a share; so we do not believe that it can explain and clear every thing: We are sure we have found it so. Now where the matter was not evident beyond all possibility of Dispute, we have taken care to restrain all rash Determinations, which would be an unpardonable imposition on the World, if we should affirm things false, or things unknown; besides that, nothing can be more Scandalous, than to let our Approbation run before our Knowledge.

III. So much we thought our selves oblig'd to say, concerning our Manner of Interpreting in general, now we shall proceed to lay before our Reader the Difficulties that gave us no little Pain,

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Pain, when we first began to set Pen to Paper. If we rendred word for word, it was apparent that the Version would become unserviceable to those that were unacquainted with Hebrew, for whose use it was principally intended: For it had been utterly impossible for them to understand it, unless they perpetually consulted the Comments, where nevertheless many Grammatical Criticisms of small importance are omitted; And frequently too, those that are unskillful in Hebraisms, would have wrested them in a wrong Sense. And now, if to avoid these Inconveniencies, we had follow'd a different Conduct, allowing our selves too great a Latitude; it was to be fear'd, lest in obscure places we might impose our own Conjectures upon the Reader, instead of the meaning of the Sacred Writers. I know 'twill be replied to all this, That a middle way is then to be observ'd, whereby the Translation shall neither be made so servile and close as to become obscure, and mis-lead those that are only skill'd in Latin, nor too lax or redundant, so as to shew the Interpreter rather than the Writer himself. But so severe an Undertaking is much harder to be well perform'd, than 'tis easie to talk of it, as we shall shew by a few Examples.

'Tis a frequent Hebraism, *And he lift up his Eyes and saw: Et sustulit oculos & vidit.* See Gen. 13. 10. & 18. 2. & 22. 4, 13. & 24. 63. & 31. 10, 12. & 37. 25. & 39. 7. & 43. 29. This Phrase with the *Hebrews*, as it appears by the above-mentioned places,

places, ſignifies to look round about one, to ſee things at hand, and remote, and the like. We frequently meet with it in the other Books of the Old Teſtament in the ſame Sence; ſo that there is no room left to doubt of its Signification. Now the *Latins* have the ſame Phraſe, but then 'tis in a different meaning. Thoſe that are afraid and aſhamed, we uſe to ſay, dare not *oculos attollere*; and on the other hand, thoſe People, *tollunt oculos*, that are poſſeſs'd with no Apprehenſions, as it were eaſie to prove by ſeveral Inſtances. Therefore this Hebraiſm *we ſaw*, was not to be verbally tranſlated.

There is a like Expreſſion, Chap. 29. 1. *Et ſuſtulit Jacobus pedes. And* Jacob *lift up his feet, and went into the Eaſtern Country.* Now who could make any thing of *tollere pedes?* The *Latins* indeed ſay, *Efferre, inferre, ferre pedem*, but in another Senſe.

The Reader muſt be forc'd to own, that theſe Hebraiſms were ſo to be rendred in the Tranſlation, as to have Latin Phraſes ſubſtituted in their room. But there are other Hebraiſms too, no leſs frequent, that afford us a juſter occaſion of doubting. The *Hebrews* often uſe to ſubjoyn an Infinitive to any other Mood or Tenſe of the ſame Verb, as *dying thou ſhalt die, ſeeing I ſaw*; and innumerable others that occurr in all the Hebrew Writers. If you tranſlate it *verbatim* into *Latin*, a Reader that only underſtands that Language, will ask you what's the meaning of that Phraſe, or whether 'tis a

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peculiar Emphasis of the Hebrew Tongue or not? If you neglect the Hebraism, and omit the Infinitive, those that have taken some pains about that Language, will complain that here's a notable Emphasis lost. Therefore let a Man manage himself as carefully as he can, yet he will lie under a necessity of displeasing one or other. I know indeed that some of the later Interpreters, instead of the Infinitive, which the Latin will not bear, use some Adverb or other, to express the Emphasis which they imagine to lie conceal'd under this Phrase, as *Gen.* 2. 17. Instead of *moriendo morieris*, they have *utique morieris*; and *Exod.* 3. 7. where we find *videndo vidi*, they turn it *probè vidi*. But though we should grant there is some mighty force in this Hebrew Phrase, if it can at any time be express'd; as in the latter Example, I would desire to know what is the meaning of *utique morieris?* Sometimes too they use the trusty Adverb *omninò*, as *Exod.* 21. 20. *Omninò vindicatur*, 22. *Omninò mulctatur*, 28. *Omninò lapidator*, &c. Which Phrases after all are not perspicuous to Latin Ears. Now for our part, we thought it much better to leave the Infinitive wholly out, either because it cannot be express'd in Latin, or because 'tis not Emphatical, but only an usual Form in the Hebrew Law, like which there are abundance in the Roman Law that are altogether redundant.

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Consult the above-cited Chapter of *Exodus*, and our (a) Annotations on *Genesis* 2. 17.

Sometimes we meet with words that have none of the same Efficacy in other Languages to match them, such as *Tholedoth*, *Generation*; for amongst the Latins, *Generatio* scarce signifies any thing else but the Action of getting, or the manner how Animals are generated; and sometimes perhaps the same as *Ætas*, or γενεὰ: But with the Jews it does not only signifie this, but denotes Original, Ancestors, and Posterity. If you are minded to gratifie a Latin Reader, and tell him what *Generation* signifies amongst the Hebrews, you must use a long-winded Periphrasis, which a simple Translation will never indure.

We frequently meet with the word *Phakad* in the Holy Scriptures, which uses to be translated *visitare*, *to visit*, and yet that is not the

(a) *Thou shalt surely die*, as we render it; but in the Original 'tis, *dying thou shalt die*. Upon this place our Author observes, that the *Hebrews* frequently joyn a Verb with the Infinitive or with a Verbal, but especially in their Laws, rather to conform with the Custom of their Language, than to denote any Emphasis. *Abimelech* threatens, *Gen.* 26. 11. that whoever touches *Isaac* or his Wife, *shall die the death*. So likewise among the *Greeks*, but chiefly the *Atticks*, we see that Nouns of the same Signification are frequently joyn'd to Verbs, as Ἀγορὰς ἀγορεύειν, βουλὴν βουλεύειν, λόγον λέγειν. And sometimes among the *Latins* we meet with *vitam vivere*, and several Expressions of the like nature, where no Grammarian ever dreamt that a particular stress is to be laid upon the words, but continues our Author, *In sacris haud rarò acutiores, quam opus est, sumus.*

meaning

meaning of it as we have (*b*) obſerved upon *Geneſis* 21. 1. The *Greeks* turn it σκέπτομαι, ἐπισκέπτω, συνεπισκέπτω, ἐπισκοπέω, μέμνημι, δίδωμι, φυλάσσω, ἀποδίδωμι, ἀνταποδίδωμι, ἐκδικέω, ἐπιζητέω, ἐπάγω, ἐφίστημι, καθίστημι, &c. Nor does this word ſignifie different things in reſpect of the various Conjugations; but even in the Conjugation *Kal*, it ſometimes ſignifies a Kindneſs, and ſometimes a Puniſhment: A Kindneſs in the above-mention'd place of *Geneſis*, and a Puniſhment in *Exod.* 20. 5. Nor does any other Language, as I know of, afford us a word, reſembling this in ſignification, which may be taken both ways: But ſtill it is to be tranſlated, and 'tis incredible what trouble theſe and ſuch other words give the Interpreter. We have tranſlated it *Gen.* 21. 1. *Curam gerere*, not that it pleaſed us, but beccauſe we could think of nothing better. If we had turned it, *The Lord, as he ſaid, viſited* Sarah. *Jehovah, quemadmodum dixerat, Saram viſitavit*, a Latin Reader would have underſtood nothing elſe by it, but that an Angel viſited *Sarah* in the name of God, as the year before *Moſes* tells us three Angels had done the like, Chap. 18.

(*b*) The Hebrew word properly ſignifies *curam gerere*, to take care of, and is taken in a two-fold Sence, for ſometimes it ſignifies the care of a Friend, and ſometimes that of a Revenger. He that turned the Septuagint Verſion into Latin before St. *Jerom*'s time, has tranſlated ſeveral places of it barbarouſly and unskillfully, which St. *Jerom*, by reaſon it was received in the Latin Churches, did not think fit to change. Hence it comes to paſs, that abundance of barbarous, or at leaſt improper words, have crept into our Lexicons and Modern Verſions.

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Since theſe, and innumerable Idioms of the like nature, are every where to be found in the Sacred Volumes, an Interpreter muſt take extraordinary Pains to diſcharge his Duty Faithfully and Modeſtly, unleſs he would have his Fidelity call'd in queſtion, and his Boldneſs cenſur'd. We own indeed, 'tis not ſo great a Fatigue to tranſlate now, after ſo many great Men whoſe Tranſlations we have, as the firſt Interpreters to their Coſt found it. 'Tis undoubtedly true, that both the Ancient and Modern Tranſlations are mighty helps to us: Far be it from us who have found by Experience, how great a Task they ſuſtained, to detract from the Praiſes of theſe deſerving Men, or to deny the great Service they have done the World, by their endeavours to illuſtrate the Scriptures. Nay, we are ſenſible, that if they had not carried the Torch before us, we had not been able to reach ſo far, as even thoſe that have perform'd the worſt in this kind have done. But if we may be allowed to ſpeak the truth freely, the better part of the Ancients either ſlaviſhly follow'd the Track, or elſe digreſſed too far from it; and tranſlated the Hebraiſms either with too ſervile a Superſtition, or too bold a Freedom; nor was it a much leſs trouble to chuſe the beſt out of their ſeveral Verſions, than to ſee whether we could not find out a better of our own. Generally ſpeaking, It was much eaſier to find what to cenſure, than what to follow. To prevent being impos'd upon by the Authority of others, every thing was to be carefully weigh'd

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weigh'd after the ſame manner, as if we had been the firſt that undertook ſuch a Work; otherwiſe we had relied on the Credit of other People, and neither ſatisfied the World nor our ſelves. Now what expence of Time and Pains it requires to perform all this, only thoſe are able to judge, who have attempted ſomething of the like nature, for others can never imagine it.

IV. Nevertheleſs, ſo many Hardſhips and Difficulties were to be overcome, to attain to a perfect Tranſlation, ſuch as we had conceived an Idea of in our Mind; but if we could not reach that heighth, we muſt be content to come as near it as poſſibly we could. Therefore we propoſed to our ſelves conſtantly to follow a middle way, that is, neither to render thoſe places that were obvious enough in the Original, obſcure with the Hebraiſms, nor out of too nice an Affection of writing Latin, to indulge our ſelves in too bold a Verſion.

But this, you'll ſay, a thouſand People have threatned to do, many years before you were born, and yet we do not reſt ſatisfied with their Performances; Do you think then that you ſhall be able to anſwer our Expectations? No, I am not ſo blinded with Self-love as to imagine any ſuch thing; but ſince the Condition of Humane Affairs is ſuch, that nothing is perfect in all Reſpects, and nothing pleaſes all alike, 'tis ſufficient if I do not incurr the Diſpleaſure of all, and if my Attempt does not lagg behind the Endeavours of others.

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Cicero formerly tranſlated the nobleſt Orations, of two of the moſt Eloquent Men that *Athens* ever bred, *Æſchines* and *Demoſthenes*, one againſt another; neither did he literally tranſlate them like an Interpreter, as he tells us himſelf, for the Tranſlations are not extant, but like an Orator, giving them all the Spirit, and Life, and beautiful turns of the Latin Tongue. As this was impracticable in a literal Verſion, he had a greater Reſpect to the Sence than the Expreſſions, for he did not think himſelf obliged to tell over all his Authors words to the Reader, but to give him them in weight. Now ſince this was not to be done in too ſtrict a Tranſlation of the Holy Books, we endeavoured to reach it in a looſer Paraphraſe, that ſo thoſe Perſons that are not delighted with the Barbarouſneſs of a Tranſlation, or do not underſtand Hebraiſms, may have ſomewhat to read and underſtand. But perhaps we have departed farther from our Original than *Cicero* did from his, becauſe the Hebrew Language differs more from the Latin, than the *Athenian* way of Writing did from the *Roman*.

'Tis true, in our Verſion we have followed the Hebrew cloſer than the Purity of the Latin will allow us; but ſince it could not be avoided, we hope we ſhall make our Reader ſome amends by our Paraphraſe. Therefore though 'tis the confeſs'd Genius of the Latin Tongue, to love Perſpicuity more than the Hebrew does; nay on the contrary, endeavours to avoid all Obſcurity

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Obſcurity as much as it can; we acknowledge our Tranſlation to be ſomewhat Obſcure, but as we are uſed to commend Pictures not for ſhewing us a handſom Face, but for repreſenting Nature to the Life, ſo a Tranſlation, where the Language of the Original is clear, ought to be clear, and where it is obſcure, ought to be obſcure. Now we mean here by *obſcure*, not thoſe things that are obſcure to the ignorant in Hebrew, for then moſt of the Scripture Expreſſions would be obſcure; but thoſe that are not ſufficiently underſtood, even by ſuch as are tolerably vers'd in that Language. On the other hand, by the word *clear*, we do not only mean thoſe things which are obvious to all Underſtandings, not excluding thoſe of the duller ſort, but which give no manner of Difficulty to the Skillful in that Language, or may be ſo expounded, as to leave no Doubt at all in the Minds of the Learned.

V. Now that we might be able to obſerve this Method through the whole Work, we laid it down for an unalterable Law in tranſlating the Hebraiſms, which ſo often occur: 1. That all the clear Hebraiſms, which would bear a Tranſlation, ſhould be tranſlated. 2. If any of them could not well be rendred into Latin, yet if our Ears were accuſtom'd to them, they ſhould be literally tranſlated. 3. That all obſcure Hebraiſms ſhould be retained. Which it will not be amiſs to illuſtrate by a few Examples.

Nothing is more common in Scripture, than Speeches and Dialogiſms that are uſher'd in by

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the Verb *Vaijomer, & dixit*, or the Gerund *Lemor, dicendo:* Now 'tis evident that the former may be fully and pertinently expreſs'd by the Latin word *inquit*, the latter by *his verbis*, and yet the Interpreters have generally forborn to uſe them; as if this, forſooth, had been too great a Liberty to take. Now this runs through all the Bible, ſo that you may find an infinite number of Sentences with theſe words, *& dixit, and he ſaid.* So in *Geneſis* 3. 1. *And he ſaid to the Woman, yea hath*, &c. 2 *And the Woman ſaid unto the Serpent, we may eat*, &c. 4. *And the Serpent ſaid unto the Woman*, &c. 9. *And he ſaid unto him, where art thou?* 10. *And he ſaid, I heard thy Voice*, &c. 11. *And he ſaid, who told thee?* &c. 12. *And the Man ſaid, the Woman*, &c. 13. *And the Lord God ſaid unto the Woman*, &c. 14. *And the Lord God ſaid unto the Serpent*, &c. 16. *To the Woman he ſaid*, &c. 17. *And unto* Adam *he ſaid.* But why we ſhould ſervilely be confin'd to the order of the Hebrew words, as if there was ſomething extraordinary in them, we ſaw no reaſon; and the comparing of our Verſion with the reſt will ſhew, which of us has expreſs'd himſelf moſt agreeably to the Genius of the Latin Tongue. So Chap. 8. 15. *And God ſpake unto* Noah, *ſaying, Et loquutus eſt Jehova ad Noach, dicendo*, or *dicens*, is indeed exactly conformable to the Hebrew words, but does not expreſs the meaning, any better than *Alloquutus eſt Noachum Deus, his verbis.* 'Tis certain that many of the Interpreters, by their obſcure Diligence, have made their

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their Translations so insupportable, that they are not to be read without Contempt. But let not the Reader imagine, that this is occasion'd by the over great care they took to render even the least Particles of Scripture as far as 'twas possible; for if this Scruple had possess'd them, they had never translated the obscure places with so much boldness, as if it were not an invidious labour, we could easily shew.

'Tis a common Hebraism *to call ones name, vocare nomen alicujus*, instead of *nomen imponere, To give one the name of.* As in Chap. 5. 29. (and 'tis often in the Book of *Genesis* alone) *And she called his name* Noah, *Et vocavit nomen ejus Noach*, that is, *Ei Noacho nomen indidit, Noachum eum nomine appellavit.* There's not the least reason in the World to doubt but 'tis so, and yet after the vulgar Interpreter's Example, several since have translated it *Vocavit nomen ejus Noah*, which is obscure and barbarous, when the Hebrew Phrase is plain enough.

We frequently meet in the beginning of a Narration, *Et fuit, And it came to pass*, in the Hebrew. As Chap. 6. 1. *Et fuit, cum cæpit homo multiplicari, And it came to pass, when Men began to multiply*, &c. which is the same in effect with ours, *Cum in terris augeri cæpissent*, as also the vulgar has translated it. But the *Tigurine* Version, and others have it barbarously, *Et factum est, cum cæpissent homines multiplicari.*

Several Interpreters have not only Superstitiously every where translated word for word,

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but have preſerv'd the very Situation of the Hebrew words, and the Conſtruction as far as they could conveniently, nay and farther too, but in this matter, we muſt own that we had a greater regard to the Latin than the Hebrew. We ſaw that a world of Hebraiſms had in ſpight of us crept into our Tranſlation; nor was it neceſſary, ſince 'twas of no advantage to the Reader, to place the Latin words after the Hebrew manner, where it was plain, that though the Order was inverted, yet the Sence was not. *Arias Montanus* who publiſhed the *Interlineary* Tranſlation, as they call it, was obliged to preſerve the Order, and as far as he was able, even the very number of the words: But thoſe that publiſh'd their Verſion apart from the Original, were not obliged in my opinion to be at ſo great an Expence to write barbarouſly. I will produce one inſtance to explain my meaning, The *Figurines*, whoſe Tranſlation is otherwiſe not to be deſpiſed, have thus rendred the 15, 16, 17 Verſes of *Gen.* 8. *Loquutus eſt autem Deus ad Noah, dicens, Egredere ex arcâ, tu & uxor tua, filii tui, & uxores filiorum tuorum tecum. Cuncta animantia quæ tecum ſunt, ex omni carne, tàm in volatili, quàm in jumento, tum etiam omni reptili quod reptat, educ tecum, & repant in terrâ, fructum edant, atque augeſcant.* But we have done it thus, *Tum allocutus eſt Noachum Deus, his verbis, Egredere ex arcâ tu, unâque tecum uxor tua, filii tui, atque eorum conjuges. Omnem etiam beſtiam, quæ tecum eſt, ex omni carne, inter volucres, inter pecudes,*

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pecudes, atque inter omnia reptilia quæ in terris repunt, unà educito, repténtque in terrâ, & in eâ creſcant, ac multiplicentur. There is nothing in the Hebrew words, which ours do not comprehend; nor has the Superſtitious Nicety of the *Tigurines*, unleſs I am miſtaken, perform'd more. But we do not cite this, or any other places, becauſe they have ſomething remarkable in them, but becauſe we happened to meet with them firſt. To conclude, All the Tranſlations of the Old Teſtament we ever ſaw, are liable to the ſame Fault, excepting that of *Seb. Caſtellio*, which is ſomewhat too bold.

'Tis by no means our Intention to blame thoſe Perſons, who in their Tranſlations of the Bible, have thought fit to deſpiſe all the Rules of Rhetorick, as to their Periods; for ſince the *Hebrews* have ſhorter turns of their Sentences, and are not ſubject to the ſame Laws as the *Greeks* and *Latins* are, there would be a wretched Confuſion indeed, if their Stile were to be ſuited to the Precepts of Rhetorick, which yet *Caſtellio* does too often. However I ſee no cauſe why we that ſpeak Latin, ſhould ſo Scrupulouſly adhere to the Hebrew order.

There are other Hebraiſms, as we obſerv'd before, the Signification of which is no leſs known, and yet we are ſcarce able to tranſlate them into Latin, without a long Circumlocution; but ſince our Ears are already accuſtom'd to ſome of them, we uſe them as the *Latins* formerly did ſeveral Greek words which their Language

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Language wanted; and beſides they have been long ago naturalized, and made Free of the Church by the Latin Fathers. Some few Examples of them we'll lay before the Reader, as we did of the former.

Thus *Geneſis* Chap. 5. 22, 24. and Chap. 6. 9. *Moſes* has uſed *incedere cum Deo, to walk with God*, inſtead of that which in Latin we ſay, *Sanctè ac piè vivere.* However the Metaphor could not be changed, without aſſuming too great a Liberty, for who can endure *Caſtellio*'s tranſlating it, *Ad dei voluntatem vitam agere, ex dei voluntate ſeſe gerere?*

Chap. 6. 9. *Noah* is ſaid to be *Vir juſtus ac integer in generationibus ſuis: A Juſt Man, and perfect in his Generations.* And Chap. 7. 1. 'tis *in eâ generatione; in that Generation*, viz. that which was deſtroy'd in the Deluge. Every Body ſees 'tis all the ſame thing as if *Moſes* had ſaid, that *Noah* was the only righteous Perſon among the Men of that Age; *Caſtellio* has tranſlated it *Sæculum* and *Ætas*, the latter of which is tolerable, but the former cannot be endured. For what Man that has made but a ſmall progreſs in Hebrew, reading this Tranſlation, would not believe that the *Hebrews* had a word which exactly anſwered *Sæculum*, when indeed they have not.

Of the ſame nature is Chap. 6. 8. *Gratiam invenire, to find Favour:* Which Phraſe has ſeveral Significations, and the Latin Tongue affords us no one ſingle Expreſſion that comes up to the full

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full extent of it. Sometimes where the Sence would bear it, we have tranſlated it, *Si qua mihi eſt apud te gratia*, for *Si inveni gratiam in oculis tuis*, as Chap. 18. 3. but this was not to be done always. *Caſtellio*, Chap. 6. 8. inſtead of that which *Moſes* expreſſes by *Noachus apud deum gratiam invenit*, inverts the Phraſe, and turns it, *Noæ fuit propitius*. Chap. 18. 3. *Si vis mihi gratiſſimum facere*. Chap. 19. 19. *Tanto me obſtringis beneficio:* In all which he has not once hit the force of the Hebraiſm, though he takes ſo large a Scope.

We find in the ſame Chapter v. 19. a common Hebraiſm, by which *omne animal* is call'd *omnis caro*, and for which *Caſtellio* uſes *omnia corpora*; but beſides that, 'tis too remote from the Hebrew word, *Caro* is ſo often taken in that Sence, both in the Scripture, and the Eccleſiaſtical Writers, that 'tis much better to retain it, than interpret it by another.

Thus in the firſt Verſe of Chap. 11. we read, *Cum univerſa terra labii unius eorundémque verborum eſſet:* The Phraſes are Hebrew, but we durſt not change them in the Latin, both becauſe we could not light upon Expreſſions proper to match them, as alſo becauſe Learned Men are not agreed about their meaning, as we have * obſerv'd about that place. *Caſtellio* has it thus, *Cum autem univerſus terrarum orbis eodem ſermone atque oratione uteretur.*

* See Diſſertation VI.

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The ſame Reaſon, ſupported by the Frequency of the Phraſe, prevail'd with us to retain the Hebraiſm *Anima mea*, *my Soul*, inſtead of *ego*. *Say, I pray thee*, ſays *Abraham* to his Wife, Chap. 12.13. *thou art my Siſter, that it may be well with me for thy ſake, and my Soul ſhall live becauſe of thee.* *Caſtellio* tranſlates it, *Ut tuâ causâ atque operâ meæ utilitati, ſalutique conſulatur.* The ſame Expreſſion is to be found often in *Homer*, which all the Interpreters have literally tranſlated.

Many more Hebraiſms, we muſt confeſs, are to be found in our Tranſlation, which becauſe they were either obſcure, or of a doubtful Signification, we tranſlated literally, leſt we ſhould obtrude our own private Conjecture upon the Reader, for the true meaning of the Sacred Writers. Sometimes too we have retain'd even the words, when we ſaw the Learned diſputed about the Signification of them with doubtful Succeſs; but a few Examples will ſooner ſhew whether we did well in this, than a long Harangue.

Therefore Chap. 6. 14. we turn'd *Arcam facies nidis inſtructam*, rather than *manſiunculis* after St. *Jerom* or *Cellis*, becauſe, though ſeveral rooms ſeem to be underſtood, in which the Creatures were lodged ſeparately, yet for all we know *Moſes* may mean a Floor, or ſomething elſe that is called *Kinnim*. *Caſtellio* borrows the word *Loculata* out of *Varro*, who calls a Fiſh-pond ſo, where the Fiſh are kept in ſeveral Cheſts, which ſuits not ill with this place, though we durſt not follow him. What

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What ſeems to be the meaning of *Servus Servorum*, Gen. 9. 25. we have ſhewn in our (*c*) Annotations upon that place. It may be a Hebraiſm like *Sanctum Sanctorum*, *Canticum Canticorum*, to denote the vileſt ſort of Slave, and it may without a Hebraiſm too be ſaid *Servus Servorum*. Nay, *Caſtellio* has not alter'd theſe words, which is ſomewhat ſtrange, conſidering how much he indulges himſelf all along in his beloved Periphraſes.

We have (*d*) ſhewn, Chap. 12. 3. what is the meaning of *in aliquo bene dicere*, and our Expoſition ſeems to be well grounded, becauſe 'tis

(*c*) As in a numerous Family there are ſeveral ſorts of Servants, ſo ſome of them are in a more honourable Poſt than others, and command thoſe below them, who may therefore be ſaid to be Servants of Servants. But ſince this is the earlieſt mention we find of *Servitude*, it may not be amiſs to examine the Riſe of it. So long as Men were but few in number, and mindful of their common original lived together; there ſeems to have been no ſuch thing as a Slave or Servant in the World; for the two cauſes of Servitude, Poverty and Force, were wanting. But upon the Diſperſion of Mankind into abundance of Colonies, ſeveral that were not able to maintain themſelves without a dependance upon others, parted with their Liberty merely to be ſuſtained. After the Trade of War became faſhionable, many that were taken Priſoners by the Enemy, and had their Lives ſpared, were by Force reduced to the State of Slaves, partly that they might not be in a Capacity to hurt them for the future, and partly that they might not be kept Gratis; and the *Vernæ*, that is, the Sons of theſe, were, by the Misfortune of their Birth, ſubjected to the ſame Condition.

(*d*) *In thee all Nations of the Earth ſhall be bleſſed.* The meaning of which place, according to our Author, is this. Whenever thy Name or Example is cited, moſt of the Eaſtern Nations ſhall uſe the following Form of Benediction, *May God bleſs thee as he bleſſed* Abraham. Thus *Gen.* 48. 20. *In thee ſhall* Iſrael *bleſs, ſaying, God make thee as* Ephraim *and as* Manaſſeh.

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agreeable to the Genius of the Hebrew Language. But leaſt thoſe that interpret theſe words after a different manner, ſhould complain that they were robb'd of a Text; as alſo becauſe otherwiſe we muſt have made uſe of too long a Periphraſis, we have tranſlated it word for word. *Caſtellio* has here tranſlated as they would have it, *In te omnes beabuntur orbis regiones.*

Chap. 6. 4. we find this paſſage in *Moſes*, *There were Nephilim* (we render it Giants) *in thoſe days*; where the word (*e*) *Nephilim* ſeems to import Robbers; but becauſe it does not fully appear whether ſuch ſort of People are meant in that place, we thought it adviſable to retain the Hebrew word. They that after the Septuagint and vulgar Tranſlation have tranſlated it *Giants*, have indeed own'd themſelves to be of their Opinion, but have brought no Arguments to prove it: And indeed, neither from the Story it ſelf, nor from the Signification of the word, are they able to bring one proof that *Giants* are meant here. On the other hand, both the Story which relates them to be *Viros Fortes*, and the word it ſelf favour our Interpretation, yet for all that we durſt not inſert it amongſt *Moſes*'s words.

For the ſame reaſon we have not changed the word *Shiloh*, Chap 49. 10. becauſe its Signification

(*e*) The Radix *Naphal*, from whence this word is undoubtedly derived, not only ſignifies *to fall*, but *to ruſh on* after the manner of Robbers; for which reaſon *Aquila* tranſlated it ἐπιπίπτοντας, and *Symmachus* βιαίους.

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is unknown. Our *Annotations upon that place have made it appear, that no one knows what is the true meaning of it. However were we to chuſe our Opinion, we ſhould incline to follow the Tranſlation of the *Septuagint*, becauſe it is leſs Obnoxious to the Calumny of the Jews, and cannot be pretended to carry the leaſt Partiality in Favour of the Chriſtian Syſtem. Therefore in our Paraphraſe we have taken the ſame courſe with the LXX, but in the Verſion rather choſe to make uſe of the Hebrew word.

*See Diſſertation XII.

VI. But a much greater Difficulty we found it, to tranſlate the Conjunctions and Prepoſitions, by reaſon of the different meaning which each of them has in the Holy Scriptures. For whereas the Latin Conjunctions and Prepoſitions have not ſo large a Signification, the Ambiguity of them is ſo far reſtrain'd by the ſtructure of the Sentence, that they can only be taken in one Sence; but among the Hebrews, who take but little notice of their Situation, one ſmall Particle has all the Significations of the Latin ones. So that if we ſhould ſometimes uſe a Latin Conjunction or Prepoſition, which generally anſwers that in the Hebrew, our Tranſlation would appear very uncouth to a Latin Ear; but if we uſe another, we fix a determin'd Sence of our own, upon that which ſeems to be doubtful in the Hebrew. Let us do what we can, we ſhall find it a difficult matter to avoid theſe Inconveniences; nay I dare ſay, no Interpreter was ever yet able to do it. For

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For inſtance, *Vau* ſupplies the place of all the Conjunctions, and if we may believe *Chr. Noldius*, has ſeventy three Significations, the chief of which is Copulative, like that of the Latin Conjunction *Et*. Nevertheleſs if it were always tranſlated like *Et*, it would not only be the moſt diſagreeable thing in the World to one that underſtands Latin, but nothing would be more obſcure and perplex'd, ſince with the *Latins* 'tis not all one whether you ſay *Et*, or whether you ſay *Atque*, *Aut*, *Tamen*, *Certè*, &c. Now if it ſo happens that the place is doubtful, and the Conjunction *Et* cannot poſſibly be uſed, becauſe it would ſpoil the Sence in Latin, a Man muſt of neceſſity make uſe of another, and ſo determine the meaning of that place, which before was doubtful.

Now in this, as well as ſeveral other Matters, we find 'tis impoſſible to make a Tranſlation of the Scripture, without a Man's interpoſing his own Sence againſt his Will: Though it were to be wiſh'd that the Sacred Volumes could be ſo tranſlated, that our own Conjectures might not be read, inſtead of the Divinely Inſpir'd Author's meaning, whether obſcure or clear. But this is impracticable for the above-mention'd Reaſons; and therefore after we have done all that we can, to explain the Sence of the Scripture as plainly as 'tis poſſible, the World muſt either acquieſce in our Endeavours, or every one muſt ſtudy Hebrew in his own defence, and take the beſt Method he can to ſatisfie himſelf.

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We have taken that care all along in our Translation, as very seldom to interpose our own Judgment, where the place was somewhat doubtful; but it was impossible to use this Caution every where. However we have faithfully set down in our Annotations, what Conjunction or Preposition was read in the Hebrew word. (*f*) Consult our Notes upon *Genesis* 6. 8. Chap. 8. 12. We have also observed, that sometimes the true Signification of the Particles is wrested, where the Translator did not clearly understand why the Sacred Writers have used them in certain places. See our Comment upon (*g*) *Gen.* 1. 20. some have made no difficulty to use Latin Particles, not such as exactly answer the Hebrew, but such as they would have used, if they had been obliged to express the same things in Latin after their own manner; which Conduct may throw both Translators and Readers into very shameful Mistakes. But we, in the Translation of the Hebrew Particles, have never receded from the most commonly received Signification of them, unless we were absolutely forced to do it, although sometimes it was none of the most proper. For we are well satisfied, that all Nations in the World do not connect their Sen-

(*f*) In the Hebrew 'tis *and* Noah, *and he staid*, but M. *le Clerk* has translated it *Noachus tamen, Expectavit tamen.* But with our Author's leave, *hæc videntur esse supervacuè notata.*

(*g*) Where agreeably to the Hebrew our Author has translated it *supra Firmamentum*, St. *Jerom*, *sub Firmamento*, the LXX. ἐπὶ τῷ στερεώματι, or *juxta Firmamentum*; the English, *in the Firmament.* But his Reasons are too long to be set down.

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tences after the ſame manner, and that we are not to introduce them uſing the ſame Thread of Narration, if we deſign faithfully to Copy their different ways of Speaking. If this had been duly conſidered by that Learned Author, who has obliged the World with a laborious and uſeful Book, called, *The Concordance of the Particles*, he had mightily leſſened the Significations which he attributes to them, for very often he minds nothing elſe, but how to ſubſtitute an agreeable, or a more emphatical Latin Particle, in the place of the Hebrew.

The ſame ingenious Perſon has obſerved, that theſe Particles are ſometimes redundant, and ſometimes deficient, which he has evinced by ſeveral unqueſtionable Examples, though ſome of them 'tis true may be call'd into queſtion. For as there are ſome places where 'tis apparent that they either abound or ought to be ſupplied, ſo there are others where they give us no ſmall difficulty, which 'tis not in the power of every little Pretender to remove. For inſtance, if in *Gen.* 19.26. where we have render'd it, *And ſhe became a Pillar of Salt*, we ſuppoſe the two Particles כ and ב to be wanting, as they commonly are, then the Sence of that paſſage will be, *And ſhe became like a Statue in a ſaltiſh Soil*, which ſeems to be the genuine Sence of the words, as we have obſerved in our Diſſertation upon that ſubject. 'Tis undoubted that ב is to be underſtood *Gen.* 24.23. Ch. 38.11. and perhaps 'tis underſtood in the abovemention'd place rather

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rather than expres'd, to avoid the harshness of the Sound, which would happen there if the foregoing word terminated in ה. We have likewise shewn, upon (*h*) *Gen.* 16. 12. that *Demonstrativum* (as the Grammarians use to call it) is frequently wanting. However, least we should forcibly seem to fasten our own meaning upon *Moses*'s words, we have rendred it *verbatim* as 'tis in the Original. See a farther instance of an Ellipsis of the like nature (*i*) *Gen.* 31. 43.

We have brought some (*k*) Examples upon *Gen.* 20. 16. where *Vau* abounds, and if we did not know that it was redundant, the meaning would be perplex'd and obscure. It is manifestly redundant, *Gen.* 22. 4. Nay sometimes it abounds in the beginning of a Book, as in the first Verse of the Prophet *Jonah*, *And the Word of the Lord*, &c. who for all that is no more tacked to *Obadiah*, than *Obadiah* is to *Amos*. This occasion'd a certain Person to conclude absurdly, that all the Books of the Old Testament were the Collections of one and the same Man, connected together after that manner.

VII. To this may be added, their everlasting way of forming their Narrations, by Preterper-

(*h*) Where *Ismael* is said in the Original to be *Onager homo*, instead of *instar Onagri*. So *Job* 11. 12. *Pullus Onagri nascitur homo*, instead of *rudis instar Pulli Onagri*.

(*i*) In the Hebrew 'tis, *The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their Father*; where the Particle *and* is wanting after *Nahor*.

(*k*) As that of *Levit. Et Postridie ET reliquia ex eo comedentur.* Where the Particle *Et* is certainly superfluous. See other Examples in the *Notitiæ*, where he handles this Particle, *Numb.* 7. 1.

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feſt or Future Tenſes joyn'd together by the Conjunction *Vau*, which gave us no ſmall trouble. 'Tis very certain that no Emphaſis is deſign'd by it, and that it may beſt be expreſs'd by Latin Participles, or other Particles, with which the *Latins* uſe to joyn the parts of their Sentences together, as all Interpreters have done, although ſome of them have uſed this Liberty more ſparingly than others. However 'tis an eternal Drudgery in a ſtrict Tranſlation, frequently to change the ſtructure of the Phraſe; nor indeed can any thing excuſe our ſo doing but mere Neceſſity. Therefore in the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis* we were often forced to omit the Conjunction, and exchange it for the Latin Particles *verò*, *autem*, *deinde*, *tum*, *enim*, *poſtea*, *dein*, *quoque*, *etiam*, *atque*, and ſuch-like. At other times we uſed Participles, as the Reader will diſcover in abundance of places, if he compares our Tranſlation with the Hebrew. For inſtance, the two and thirtieth Chapter is thus joyn'd together. 1. *AND* Jacob *went*—*AND they met him.* 2. *AND* Jacob *ſaid*—*AND he called the name of the place*—3. *AND* Jacob *ſent*—4. *AND he commanded them*—6 *AND the Meſſengers returned*—7. *AND he was afraid*—*AND was in diſtreſs*—*AND he divided*—8. *AND he ſaid*, &c. Which would be inſupportable in Latin.

There are ſeveral Verſions of the Bible, eſpecially into the Modern Languages, which have all along preſerved this Conjunction, as if it added ſome peculiar Energy or Beauty to the Narration;

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tion; but those that are acquainted with the Genius of the Hebrew Tongue, can satisfie them of the contrary. In a plain Narration indeed, this troublesome Conjunction may pretty well be born in some other Tongues; but in an Argument or so, if it were used in French, it would not only wound the Ears in a wonderful manner, but so fatally disturb the Sence, that what would be clear in Hebrew, would be in French the most confused Stuff imaginable.

However in this, as well as other things, too great a License is to be avoided, least by omitting a Particle, or altering the structure of a Sentence, we may happen to alter the Sence, and render the Narration indirect and oblique. For by this means an unskillful Reader will imagine, that some things are related *en passant*, while the Historian makes haste to go to others that are more material. Thus according to our Translation, *Moses* begins the 32d Chapter in these words, *Jacobus iter suum perrexit, occurrerúntque Angeli Dei, quos cum vidit Jacobus, hæc sunt ait Dei castra, eique loco Machanajim nomen imposuit.* By this manner of relating the Story, 'tis plain that the meeting of the Angels is made a more remarkable Circumstance, than if we had rendred it with *Castellio, Jacobus iter suum perrexit, in quo cum ei Divini Angeli occurrissent, ille eis visis ita dixit, hoc divinum agmen est. Itaque locum inde Machanaim appellavit.*

It was no small Perplexity to us in our Translation, that not only the Beginning, Progress

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and Conclusion of the same thing, were expressed by Verbs that were tacked together by the never-failing Conjunction *Vau*, but likewise by one and the same Verb. Thus in the above-cited Narration, *and* Jacob *went*, the Hebrew word may be as well taken to signifie the Beginning of a Journey, as the Continuation of it. However we translated it in the latter Sense, as the occasion there required.

VIII. We have already declared in the eighth Section of the former Dissertation, that we have follow'd the Masoretick Copy in our Translation: But although we call it *Copy* in the Singular Number, it may be called *Copies*, since by this name we comprehend both the Readings in the Text, and those in the Margin, which came from two several Books; unless we suppose that the *Keri* proceeded from the received way of reading in the Synagogue of *Tiberias* by some *Oral Tradition*, as 'tis called; and the *Kethb* to have been the Reading it self, written in a Book of venerable Antiquity. However the matter was, as these two Readings have been deservedly compared by the generality of Translators, so that which seem'd the best we justly preferr'd, and this is the conduct we follow'd. Sometimes indeed the *Keri* affords a more convenient Reading than the *Kethb*, but the latter very often is better than the former. But as I often thought of this, and several other things of the like nature, I suspected that the *Rabbins*, to inhance the value of their Trade, observ'd the same Conduct as the

Greek

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Greek Rhetoricians were said to do, *Who least the World should imagine they knew but few things, invented abundance of strange Terms that were nothing to the purpose, that their Art might have the Reputation of being more difficult than really it was.* However, we have all along follow'd the Masoretick way of Pointing, except that with the generality of Interpreters we have not minded the Accents, but only followed the Sence and the Structure of the words. We shall not here repeat what several Learned Men have said upon this occasion. Let the Reader only turn over the 23d Chapter of *Buxtorf's Thesaurus*, lib. 2. where he treats of this Subject, and he will be satisfied that what I have advanced concerning the *Rabbins* is true, and that these Masters affect an abstruse unedifying Knowledge, and have clogg'd a Study, which otherwise would be easie enough, with endless Difficulties of their own raising. The two first words of *Genesis* sufficiently confute all that Learning.

Of greater moment is the distinction of *Verses*, as they are called, which however *Elias Levita* a Jew, and several Christians, have demonstrated to have been made by none of the Prophets. And indeed this distinction is not to be found in the Manuscript Copies of the Old Interpreters, nor can be used in many places, without maiming the Period, or dividing the Verb from what relates to it, which is extremely ridiculous. Therefore though to comply with a received Custom, and that the Citations might more easily be

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found out, we have distinguished the Verses by Numbers, yet we have only had a regard to the Sence in the manner of our Pointing; Sometimes the Period (if the parts of a Sentence in the Latin Translation of an Hebrew Book may be called by that name) ends with the Verse, and sometimes it is carried beyond it. Nay sometimes it begins in the middle of a Verse, and sometimes it terminates with it, as seem'd most agreeable to the nature of the Latin Tongue.

The Reader will likewise find, both in our Translation and Paraphrase, two other sorts of Divisions, which we must give him an account of. We have not always follow'd the Chapters in the distinction of our Sections, although in complaisance to the ancient Custom, we have mark'd them on the top of the Page, and in the Margin, but we have divided the Argument into greater or lesser Sections, according as the Matters of Fact happen to be connected. And this we did upon the following Consideration, that both the whole Argument in one Series, and our Annotations upon it, might be read in the same order, because both the Divine Historian, and our Comments upon him, would by this means be better understood. 'Tis certain, the Jews have their own Sections, plainly different from our Chapters, which they follow in their publick Readings in their Synagogues.

Besides this, we have divided every Section into several *Paragraphs*, (to borrow a Term of Art from the Lawyers) though somewhat of the longest,

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longeſt, which we ſuppoſed would contribute to the Perſpicuity of the Hiſtory, and be of great Advantage to the Reader. For where the particular Reaſonings, or ſeveral parts of the Narration, are not continued as it were in the ſame breath with the reſt, but divided by certain Intervals, we better comprehend both the Parts and Series of the Oration, and imprint it on our Memory, and if there be occaſion, recollect it in our Minds. This is the reaſon why the Grammarians in former times, to diſtinguiſh the ſeveral parts of the Chorus's in their Tragedies, and the Lawyers to diſtinguiſh the Heads of their Laws, made uſe of *Paragraphs*. And therefore, though in the Manuſcripts and in the Editions no diſtinctions of this nature do appear, (for we do not mind the Jewiſh) yet we thought it *à propos* to make uſe of them, as being clearly of opinion, that nothing ought to be deſpiſed, which tends to Perſpicuity, and the Convenience of the Reader.

Nor will any one, as we imagine, blame theſe our Diviſions, as if they contradicted what we ſo ſolemnly profeſſed before, *viz.* That we would follow the Copies of the *Maſorites*. For though theſe Diviſions are very ſerviceable to Perſpicuity and Order, yet they make not the leaſt Alteration in the Reading or Pronouncing of words, in which two reſpects we ſaid we look'd upon theſe Copies to be the moſt correct of all.

We hope the Reader will not be diſpleaſed, that after the Example of ſeveral Modern Interpreters,

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preters, we have not written the Proper Names, as they are now a-days read by the Jews. Our Ears have been ſo long accuſtom'd to them, that we can ſcarce endure thoſe that either ſpeak or pronounce them otherwiſe; for who with any Patience could hear a Fellow thunder out *Chenaiah, Jitſchak, Jahacob, Moſche, Jehoſchuhak*, &c. as thoſe names are pronounced by the Jews, according to the roughneſs of their Language. There are alſo ſeveral words that were otherwiſe read by the LXX Interpreters than they are by the *Maſorites*, as *Jeruſalem*, not *Jeruſalaim*; *Nabuchodonoſor*, not *Nebuchadnetſar*, and ſuch-like. Which of them pronounced the righteſt, we ſhall not now enquire; for we do not regard the thing it ſelf, but only the Cuſtom of the Chriſtian Churches from the Beginning.

But then we obſerv'd this Conduct; to ſet down the more celebrated and uſual Names after the Chriſtian manner, and the leſs known and frequent after the Jewiſh, becauſe, generally ſpeaking, they do not ſeem to be Written true in the Greek and Latin Books. Where-ever we have neglected to do it, the Reader is to impute it to our being too attentive upon the things themſelves, and conſequently not able to mind the words, and not imagine that we did it on purpoſe.

As for what regards the Letters, we have herein follow'd the Ancients, that is to ſay, *Beth* has always the power of the Latin *B*, *Zain* is pronounced like a *Z*, *Cheth* as a *χ*, which comes the neareſt of any to the double Aſpiration of the Hebrew

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Hebrew Letter, which in our Commentary we have expreſs'd by a double *H*, where we have obſerv'd how the Hebrew words are to be writ-ten; *Teth* like a *T*, *Jod* like the *J* Conſonant of the French, *Caph* like a χ, *Ain* like an *H*, though 'tis of a different ſound, but we could not think of a better. *Pe* like the φ of the *Greeks*; *Tſaddi* like *Tſ*; *Kuph* like *K*; *Schin* always after the ſame manner, that is, as *ch* is pronounc'd by the *French*, *ſch* by the *Germans*, *ſh* by the *Engliſh*; and laſtly, *Tau* like the Greek θ. We could give our Reaſons for this way of Pronunciation, if they would not take up too much room in this Diſſertation. But thoſe that are not ſo well verſ'd in thoſe things, may conſult *Druſius*'s old Hebrew Alphabet. But as we hinted before, in the more remarkable Names we have had a greater regard to Cuſtom, than to the power of the Letters, and at other times thought it ſufficient to make uſe of thoſe Latin Letters that neareſt reſembled them.

IX. Foraſmuch as we have endeavour'd to tranſlate, and write Annotations upon the Sacred Volumes of the *Hebrews*, after ſo many Learned Men, we freely acknowledge that we have all along made uſe of the Labours of other Writers, and derived conſiderable Aſſiſtances from them. In the firſt place, we profeſs that we have always conſulted the Old and Modern Tranſlations in all difficult places, but ſo as never to give a blind aſſent to what they ſay, but eſpecially the Moderns. We weigh'd and examin'd every Word and

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and Expreſſion, if it contain'd any Difficulty, with no leſs Care and Application than if no one had gone this way before us, and therefore explain'd the Reaſons of them which we knew to be certainly ſo. Yet a vaſt difference ought to be made between the Ancient and the later Verſions, which we have accurately obſerved; for ſince, as we took notice in the former Diſſertation, the ancient Interpreters were able to know the Significations of Words and Phraſes from the uſe of the Languages then in being, their very Authority is by no means to be deſpiſed, when it oppoſes no Reaſons deduced from Grammar. On the other hand, The Opinions of the Modern Interpreters, unleſs they are ſupported by the Truth, ought to be little regarded, becauſe they had no other way to find out the Meaning of the Scripture, but by long Study as well as we; and therefore are not to be admitted, unleſs they give ſubſtantial Grounds for what they avouch. This is the Reaſon why we ſeldom borrow'd any Teſtimony from the new Tranſlations, becauſe that after all the plauſible Reaſons they give for their particular Verſions; yet whether the Authority of their Tranſlations goes for or againſt us, 'tis of it ſelf of no weight at all. However we would not be ſo miſ-underſtood as if we deſpiſed them, ſince we have frequently uſed them with great Advantage on our ſide; but we thought our ſelves obliged to make this open Confeſſion, that the Reader might know once for all, why we alledge their Authority ſo ſeldom.

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ſeldom. Beſides, all or moſt of their Verſions could not be compared, without too great a Fatigue to the Reader, and too tireſom a Prolixity; nor cenſured, without incurring the Envy of ſeveral ill-diſpoſed Perſons, which we would willingly avoid. Wherefore we thought it more adviſed, to omit all the Modern Verſions whatever, and only to take our Teſtimonies from the Ancient, and to compare them one with another, though we are far from pretending to give an accurate Collation of them. This would have proved too tedious a Work, and indeed far different from our Deſign, who intended to find out what the Sacred Writers meant, and not how often or how much the Interpreters have deviated from their Sence.

We have likewiſe conſulted the Annotations and Commentaries of ſeveral Writers, but more eſpecially have we read over a far greater number of Books, that have occaſionally treated of Sacred things, and explained ſeveral Paſſages of Scripture. Out of all theſe, whatever ſeem'd neceſſary, and to the purpoſe, have we inſerted into our Commentaries, and indeed we have generally cited the names of the latter. But as for thoſe who have profeſſedly written upon the Sacred Books, we have more ſeldom made uſe of their Names, becauſe, as they may be eaſily conſulted, ſo large Collections out of their Books are in every Bodies hands. Our principal Aim was, to ſet down thoſe Obſervations, by which we believed the Scriptures might be illuſtrated, and

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and not to swell our Volume with a Catalogue of Names, which have no Authority in things of this nature. But as we said before, we have more frequently cited by name those that have not writ a continued Commentary, as well out of Gratitude, because some of them have given us much greater Helps than all the Commentators put together; as also because we might give a short Abridgment of their Opinions; and it would be no superfluous Labour to direct the Reader where he might find them delivered more at large.

We have already, in part, explain'd the Design of our Commentary in the second Section, however we shall add, That we have observ'd that choice in selecting the Interpretations, as only to referr to those that seem'd to be the most probable of all, and lay down the Reasons that support them, omitting a Confutation of the rest, except a very few upon the most difficult places, and where they might be comprehended in a few words. It had been in our Opinion a prodigious Work, and (to speak a bold Truth) of very little use, if we had been obliged to cite the Opinions of all the Commentators, to have added their several Reasons, to have particularly confuted what we thought improbable, and to defend what we looked upon to be the best grounded. Such an Undertaking would far exceed in bulk every thing that has yet been published upon the Scripture, and would rather overwhelm the Reader than help him. Indeed those

that

that attempt to explain the Bible, would be very unhappy Persons, if they were forced to set down all the Conjectures of other Men, for no other reason, but merely because they writ before them. Nay, the Readers would be in a more miserable Condition, if they were not allow'd to pass their Judgment upon the meaning of the Scripture, unless they heard and weigh'd the Opinions of all. Both of them must in their own defence lay aside all Examination of the Holy Volumes, since the Life of a Patriarch would not be long enough to go through so infinite a Labour. And therefore we have made use of our own Judgment in our choice of the Interpretations which we produce and examine in the doubtful places, and yet we would have no one infer from hence, that we despised all the rest, which either are already made publick, or lie conceal'd in the Cabinets of the Learned; for although out of an Infirmity common to all Mankind, and even through our own fault, we own we may err, yet it may easily happen, that while a Man is distracted with multiplicity of Thoughts, many things may escape him, and that several excellent Interpretations may be out abroad in the World, which he never so much as heard of.

How unwilling we are to neglect any probable Interpretation, where the Sence is doubtful, the Reader will soon be convinc'd, if he observes how often we refrain our hand, which we have already hinted, and need not here repeat.

X. Since

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X. Since the Hebrew Tongue, ſuch as it has come down to us, is contain'd in the ſmall Volume of the Old Teſtament, wherein are ſeveral Words and Phraſes that occurr but once, or ſeldom, and are not ſufficiently clear'd by the Sence of the places, we often thought it convenient to borrow aſſiſtance from the neighbouring Languages, as we ſaw had been practis'd by Men of the greateſt Learning before us with general Approbation. If out of all the Latin Authors, we had only *Livy*'s Works for inſtance now remaining, I make no queſtion but that a world of obſcure Paſſages in him, might be happily explain'd by the *Italian*, *Spaniſh* and *French* Languages; for there are ſtill remaining in thoſe Tongues, many Roots and Derivatives from an infinite number of Latin words, which might be of great uſe to illuſtrate that Hiſtorian; and therefore ſeveral Perſons of the firſt Rank, not without good reaſon, have ſucceſsfully borrow'd helps from the other Oriental Languages, to prove which Aſſertion Monſieur *Bochart* alone will furniſh us with ſeveral Examples, and the Reader may farther ſatisfie himſelf by conſulting our own Annotations.

And yet this aſſiſtance is not unadviſedly, or without warrantable grounds to be uſed, for it frequently happens, even in Languages which are derived from the ſame Stock, that words of a like ſound have yet a very different Signification. For inſtance, *Abbacinare* in Italian, ſignifies *to make blind*; *Baſſiner* in French, *to waſh*; *Abbellare* in

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in Italian, *to please*; *Embellir* in French, *to adorn*; *Abbronzare* in Italian, *to dry*; *Bronzer* in French, *to blacken*. They that have leisure to turn over any Lexicon, and compare the two Tongues, will meet with an infinite number of the like instances. And this very thing, even in the Interpretation of Latin Authors, has often deceiv'd those Persons whose Mother-Tongues were derived from the Latin, while the words thus derived from the Latin, bear a quite different Signification. So while the *Latins*, by the word *exterminare*, mean *ejicere terminis*, *to turn one out of his Country*; the *Italians* by *esterminare*, and the *French* by *exterminer*, understand *to destroy by killing*, which are very different. Now if any *French-man* or *Italian* were to read in *Cicero*, *Orat. pro L. Flacco*, that by the Valour of *P. Valerius Publicola*, the Kings were *exterminati*, i.e. turn'd out, unless he were a Man of Learning above the common sort, he would be apt to imagine, it might be translated *Verbatim* as 'tis used in their own Language; whereas *Cicero* does by no means say, that the Kings were killed, but only turn'd out by *Valerius*. Nay, that most Learned Man, *Des. Heraldus*, in his Annotations upon *Arnobius*, lib. 1. p. 2. was of Opinion, that a certain place of that Writer was faulty, because he understood the word as it is used in the French Tongue, *Exterminati sumus dum longè*, says *Arnobius*, *examina mærorum tanta mortalium sunt impertata seculis*. His meaning is, That ever since the Christians leaving the Borders of *Judea*,

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were ſpread all over the Roman Empire, numberleſs Calamities, if we may believe the *Pagans*, afflicted the whole World. An infinite number of ſuch Examples may be found, by thoſe that will examine the Matter curiouſly.

And therefore the Hebrew words can only then be explain'd by the neighbouring Languages, where the Sence and Circumſtance of places will naturally lead an Interpreter to them, for the Affinity of Sound and Signification are not ſufficient. Nay, the deſire of extolling the mighty uſe of the Oriental Languages, which they learn'd with incredible Toil and Induſtry, ſeems naturally to have led ſome Learned Men upon (*l*) ſeeking the Roots of the Hebrew names in thoſe Tongues.

XI. The moſt infallible way to trace the Signification of an obſcure word, is, in my Opinion, taken from the comparing of places, for when any word, where-ever we find it, has one certain limited Signification that ſuits it beſt, we cannot forbear but we muſt think it true; and

(*l*) Thus ſome Learned Men have derived the word *Schammim*, *Heavens*, from an Arabick word *Samaa*, or *Samiſa*, or *Samava*, i. e. *high*, *lofty*, though the latter ſeems rather to be derived from the former; and 'tis probable that the Appellation of the word, which ſignifies *Heaven*, was found out before that which ſignifies *high*: Thus alſo *Ludolfus*, whoſe incomparable Skill in the *Æthiopick* Language, is well known in the World, maintains that the word *Adama* is derived from an *Æthiopick* Root of the ſame ſound, which ſignifies *beautiful and pleaſant*; and that the Earth was ſo called for its being *pleaſant*, and our firſt Parent for his *beauty*.

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this is perform'd by the Modern Interpreters, who are furniſh'd with Lexicons and Concordances, with much greater Succeſs than the Ancients could pretend to, who were deſtitute of theſe helps. Nevertheleſs they have not gone ſo far, as to leave no Diſcoveries to be made by the Diligence of Poſterity. For it often happens, while they diſſent from thoſe of former Times, becauſe they do not comprehend the Reaſons they went upon, and while they indulge themſelves too much in their own Conjectures which are wholly ſupported by obſcure or ambiguous places, that they fail of attaining the true Signification of ſeveral words. 'Tis not enough to find out a Signification for a word, which perhaps is not amiſs, for a Tranſlator is obliged to give the Author's true meaning, and therefore ought to conſult the *Uſus loquendi*, which for the greateſt part is beſt found out of the Old Interpreters and Languages. But what we endeavour'd to perform throughout the whole Work, will beſt appear by reading it; and how troubleſom an Employment this Collation of places is, thoſe Perſons will ſoon underſtand, that are pleaſed to make the Experiment.

XII. The Original of words, where it can certainly be known, does often direct us to their true Signification, and therefore the Interpreters have ſpared no Pains to find out the Etymologies of obſcure words. For Example, We have ſhown what the word

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(*m*) *Pharaoh* ſignifies, by finding its Root in the *Arabick*, Chap. 12. 15. who are called (*m*) *Hhartumim*, *Gen.* 41. 8. we have diſcover'd by the Signification of the words it is compounded of. We have likewiſe diſcover'd what are thoſe (*m*) Ears which are call'd *Tſenoumoth* in the ſame Chapter, which was ſhown by no one, as we know of, before.

Bochart has borrow'd a great many things out of the ſame Fountain, which he has happily made uſe of, in tracing out the Nations that are call'd by their ancient Names in the tenth Chapter of *Geneſis*; to which we have added a few of our own, as well to confirm ſome of his by new Arguments, as to confute others. See what we have written concerning the name of the *Tibarenes*, v. 2. of the *Riphai* and *Thogarma*, v. 3. of *Tharſi* and

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(*m*) *Pharaoh* is not a proper Name, but a common Title to all the Egyptian Kings till the time of *Ezekiel*. Ὁ φαραὼ, ſays *Joſephus*, l. 8. c. 2. κατ' Αἰγυπτίους βασιλέα σημαίνει. Our Author derives it from an *Arabick* word ſtill in uſe, *Pharaha*, *ſummum tenuit*; and *Pharahon* not only ſignifies the *top* of any thing, but the *Prince* of a Family. *Hhartumim*, which we have rendred *Magicians*, he deduces from the *Syriack* and *Chaldee* Roots *hhor* or *hhavar*, *vidit*, and *toum*, *claudere*. Clauſa *enim & ignota aliis hominibus* videre *ſeu ſcire exiſtimabantur Magi*: For which reaſon *Aquila* tranſlated it κρυπτῆρας, *occultatores*. As for the word *Tſenoumoth*, which our Engliſh Bibles have rendred *withered*, M. *le Clerk* has tranſlated it *trita*, that is, *thraſhed*. *Tſanma* in *Chaldee* ſignifies a hard Stone; ſo *Tſenoumoth* may ſignifie Ears of Corn that are thraſhed by a Staff ſharpned upon Stones. *Iſaiah* 28. 27. makes mention of ſuch a Staff; and *Thevenot*, Part 2. lib. 1. c. 5. tells us, that in moſt parts of the Eaſt they beat out the Grain with ſuch a Flail.

(*n*) *Chit-*

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(*n*) *Chittim*, v.4. of the *Numidæ* and *Mauri*, v.6. of the *Chasluchæans* and *Caphthoræans*, v. 14.

But here also especial care is to be taken that we be not deceiv'd by the Affinity of words; to prevent which, it must be supported by Historical Authority, as *Bochart* has done, and we have often endeavour'd to do the same. See for Example our Observations upon the name (*o*) *Charræ*, upon *Gen.* 11.31. We must likewise take heed, not to deduce all our Reasonings from the bare Etymology, as the *Rabbins* often do, who have Histories ready at hand that are built upon them. Oftentimes words have so strangely deviated from their Primitive Signification into another, that those who use them do not at all think of their Original. The two Greek words προσκυνεῖν and χειροτονεῖν, are famous Instances

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(*n*) By this name *Bochart* supposes *Italy* to be meant, but our Author concludes it to be *Macedonia*: 1. Because *Alexander* is said, 1 *Macc.* 1. 1. to have come out of the Land of *Chettiim*; and *Perses* the last King of *Macedon* is in the same Book, c. 8. 5. called the King of the *Chittims*. 2. Because the old name of *Macedon*, Μάκιττος, Μακιτία, or Μακιττία, as we find it in *Stephanus*, *Hesychius*, and others, alludes to the word *Chittim*. We had not room to insert the rest.

(*o*) *Bochart*, lib. 2. c. 14. *Phal.* thinks it was so called from *Haran*, *Abraham*'s Brother, which is scarce credible, since besides the difference in Writing, we are told *v.* 28. that *Haran* died at *Ur* of the *Chaldæans*, and we are no where inform'd that he was ever here. Now how is it probable that this City should take its name from a Stranger, who perhaps never saw it in his Life, and whose Father did not build it? Our Author with more reason derives it from *Hharar exustus, adustus fuit*, by reason of the vast Desarts that lay round it; burnt up with the heat of the Sun. And such a Description *Plutarch* gives us of it in his Life of *M. Crassus*, so does *Appian* the Historian in *Parthicis*, p. 141. *Ed. Steph.*

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of the Truth of this, as we could ſhew, if we were now treating of the Greek Tongue.

XIII. Furniſh'd with theſe helps eſpecially, not to mention any more, we begin our Tranſlation and Commentary upon the Old Teſtament. 'Tis true, ſeveral Learned Men have gone the ſame way before us, eſpecially in the laſt Age, and the beginning of this, who deſerve great Commendation for their Performances. But if we may be allow'd to ſpeak the Truth, though they neither wanted Abilities nor Diligence, yet two things ſtood in their way, which hinder'd them from giving any laſting Satisfaction to thoſe that came after them.

The firſt was, The want of due Helps, which we now enjoy; for we may juſtly ſay of the Writers of this Age, that they have taken more Pains in illuſtrating and cultivating the Sacred Philology, than was done in two thouſand years before. Hence it comes to paſs, that we have ſuch vaſt numbers of excellent Works to aſſiſt us to underſtand the Holy Volumes. The Truth of this ſufficiently appears by the Polyglott Bibles, the Lexicons, and Treatiſes of all ſorts that adorn our Libraries, which before had no ſuch Treaſures in them, and the reading of our Work, wherein they are ſo often commended, will undeniably evince it.

The other was, The general Bent of the laſt Age, rather towards Theological than Grammatical Learning, by reaſon of the new Controverſies that then employ'd the whole Chriſtian World;

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ſo that the Interpreters rather buſied themſelves to confute Errors, than give us a plain and critical Enarration of the words. I will not ſay, that by thus inclining their Studies, Men of Parts and Learning have been ſo far led out of the way, that they have ſought out Doctrines, which were true indeed, and agreeable to Religion, in improper places, though nothing be more certain; however 'tis manifeſt, that by ſo doing, they have neglected ſeveral helps neceſſary for the underſtanding of Languages, ſince 'tis impoſſible for a Man to graſp every thing at the ſame time. They that have read the moſt celebrated Commentaries of the Divines of the laſt Age, and examined their Tranſlations, know how true this is, and to prove it to thoſe that never looked upon them, would be labour loſt.

They that employ'd their time moſt this way, chiefly depended upon ſome late Grammarians of the Jews and Modern *Rabbins*, but were in a manner deſtitute of all other Aſſiſtances of Critical Learning. I would fain know which of them in the laſt Age, applied the Hiſtories of the old Eaſtern People who border'd upon the *Hebrews*, and what we find in ancient Authors relating to their Manners, Opinions, and their Country, towards the Illuſtration of the Scriptures; two or three perhaps and no more. Nevertheleſs St. *Jerom* had long ago adviſed, though no body would regard him, That *'twas one thing to compoſe Books of our own, as for inſtance about Covetouſneſs, Faith, Virginity, Widows, and upon each of theſe Heads to pro-*

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duce Testimonies from all parts of the Bible, and set them off with a little secular Eloquence, and make a magnificent appearance upon such common subjects; and another thing to dive into the Sence of the Prophets and Apostles, to know why they writ so, by what reasons they support their Opinions, what peculiar things the Idumeans, *the* Moabites, *the* Ammonites, *the* Tyrians, *the* Philistines, *the* Egyptians *and* Assyrians *have to themselves in the Old Testament. For 'tis necessary*, continues he, *that they should have different Causes, and Arguments, and Originals, according to the Diversity of Places, and Times, and Men, to whom they were written.* But neither in St. *Jerom*'s time, nor afterwards, did any one, before our Age, regard this Advice as it deserved; so that our Ancestors have left us a very ample Harvest for this sort of Learning; upon this account we may pretend to set out more accurate Translations and Annotations upon the Scriptures than they did, though we are otherwise inferior to them in Wit, Learning and Industry. In their times Theological and Moral Precepts could hardly be inculcated enough, but now since they are known to all, we lie under no necessity to dwell upon them any longer. Therefore have we employ'd our selves in that way of Interpretation which we have describ'd in this Dissertation, and have endeavour'd to observe the Laws we enjoyn'd our selves very Religiously. How we have succeeded in our Performance, let other Persons judge, who have pursued these Studies out of a desire to find out the

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Truth, to whose Censure we most willingly submit our Undertaking, and shall be always ready to receive their Instructions and Emendations, with all imaginable Gratitude.

Dissertation III.

Concerning Moses, *the Writer of the Pentateuch, and his Design in writing.*

I. *The Necessity of Treating of the Writer of the Pentateuch.* II. *Three sorts of things we find in the Pentateuch;* 1. *Those that happen'd before* Moses: 2. *The Actions of* Moses, *which were without doubt first written by himself:* 3. *Other things which really are, or at least seem to be, later than the Age of* Moses. III. *Those Passages, which some People imagine to be later than* Moses, *are examined.* IV. *That very few places can come under that Denomination, however, that the Pentateuch ought not to be given away from* Moses *upon that account.* V. *That 'tis uncertain who made those Additions.* VI. *That the Design of the Writer, is of great Importance towards the better understanding of his Writings,* VII. Moses's *Design in writing the Pentateuch, inquired into.*

THE two former Dissertations had a relation to the other Books of the Old Testament,

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ment, as well as to thoſe of *Moſes*; but now we intend to treat of the *Moſaical* Writings, excluſive of the reſt; for we cannot well omit the Diſcuſſion of that celebrated Queſtion, which has been ſo warmly debated in this Age, *viz. Whether* Moſes *writ the Pentateuch*. Some Authors that have made no ſmall noiſe in the World, have poſitively aſſerted that it was not writ by *Moſes*; or at leaſt, that, ſuch as it has come down to our hands, it is not wholly his. However we in our Commentaries, according to the received Opinion of the moſt ancient Times, have all along attributed it to him. Therefore we muſt now enquire, which of the two Opinions is moſt agreeable to Truth; and this we ſhall perform after ſuch a manner, as not to bring the leaſt Reproaches or invidious Reflections, but only Reaſon and Arguments, againſt thoſe that are of the contrary ſide; neither out of an unmeaſurable Prepoſſeſſion, ſhall we deny thoſe things that are evidently plain. Then after we have fully proved the Pentateuch to be the Work of *Moſes*, we ſhall endeavour to find out his Deſign in writing it. No Thinking Man will doubt, but that both theſe Diſquiſitions are of the laſt Conſequence towards the better underſtanding of theſe Books; and ſince they could not ſo conveniently be handled in our Commentary, we ſhall diſpatch them in this Diſſertation with all the brevity we can.

II. There are three ſorts of things to be found in the Writings of *Moſes*, which we muſt here take

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take into our Consideration. We shall have soon done with the two first, but we shall dwell somewhat longer upon the last. The first comprehends those things which were done before *Moses* was born, at least before he came to years of Maturity; of which nature is the History compriz'd in *Genesis*, and the beginning of *Exodus*, and here (if we except a few places which we shall hereafter examine) we find nothing that may induce us to believe, that *Moses* was not the Author. No body doubts, but that the Creation of the World, and the other Matters of Fact, which are there related down to *Moses*'s Parents, might be written by him. Learned Men only doubt whether *Moses* really writ them, and if he writ them, whether he was the first that convey'd them down to Posterity in writing, or whether he might not take what he has from ancienter Memoirs, which were afterwards lost.

If *Moses* was the first that writ of these Matters, and they were never consign'd in Writing before, it necessarily follows, that he must either have them by an immediate Revelation from God, or else that they were communicated to him by Men, who preserved them in their Memories; for there is no other way for him to arrive to the Knowledge of them. Now he no where tells us, they were communicated to him by God; nor, though such a thing is possible, yet since *Moses* is silent in the matter, dares any one pretend to affirm it as an undoubted Truth, but only the *Rabbins*, who were never asham'd of

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of Lying, and whoſe Aſſertions conſequently are not much to be regarded. Now it ſcarce ſeems probable, that ſo many Names, and the Particulars of ſo many Years, could be handed down by Tradition. 'Tis much more probable, that the ancient Patriarchs left them in Writing, and ſo tranſmitted them to their Poſterity; which Monuments coming into the hands of *Moſes*, he diligently copied and connected them with the Hiſtory of his own Age; for what Deſign and Purpoſe we ſhall afterwards enquire. Now what ſort of Writings they were, and how numerous, only thoſe Perſons can inform us, who lived in thoſe Times, if they were reſtor'd to Life again. We conjecture that ſome of them were written, *carminibus*, Ὁμοιοτελεύτοις, in Verſes of the ſame Termination, wherein we ſhall at ſome better convenience, ſhew the Poetry of the Hebrews to conſiſt. (*a*) See our Notes upon Chap. 4. 23, 24. and Chap. 7. 11. 'Tis certain that almoſt all Nations in the World preſerved the Fragments of their anciente ſt Hiſtories in Verſe, as ſeveral Learned Men

(*a*) *Lamech*'s Speech, *Gen.* 4. 23. M. *le Clerk* has obſerv'd to conſiſt of words of the ſame Termination in the Hebrew, and 'tis his Opinion, that *Moſes* borrow'd abundance of Paſſages from ancient Verſes, in which Antiquity uſed to preſerve the Memory of all remarkable Tranſactions before the diſcovery of Letters. The ſame remark he makes upon Chap. 7. 11. adding, That there is ſomething of a Poetical Spirit in the latter. But I look upon this Criticiſm to be ill grounded, for why might not ſuch a Paſſage fall from *Moſes* unawares, as well as this Hexameter Verſe from *Tully* in one of his Orations, *In quâ re non inficior mediocriter eſſe?* Beſides, who would conclude that *Tacitus* compil'd his Hiſtory out of Poetical Monuments, becauſe he begins with, *Urbem Romam à principio Reges habuere.*

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have proved: And it appears, that even among the *Hebrews*, in *Moses*'s time, the Memory of great Actions was celebrated in Verse, which the People learn'd by Heart, as the Songs of *Moses* himself, that are extant both in *Exodus* 15. and *Deuteronomy* 32. demonstrate. Nay, God himself commanded the latter to be learn'd by the Children of *Israel*, as we find in *Deut.* 31. 29. Nor ought any one to wonder, that we carry the beginnings of Poetry so high, since Musick, by the Invention of some Instruments, flourish'd even before the Deluge, as *Moses* expressly tells us, *Gen.* 4. 21. Nay, 'tis probable, that Men employ'd themselves in Vocal Musick, before they thought of the Instrumental. But though some few memorable Transactions might be preserv'd in Verse, which the long-liv'd Patriarchs perhaps might have by heart, yet a Chronology, including the Calculation of so many years, seems too unruly an Argument to have been included in them. And *Moses* makes mention of the *Book of the Battels of the Lord*, of which we shall treat when we come to *Numbers* 21. 14.

The second sort of things, which we read in the Pentateuch, 'tis evident were written by *Moses* himself. *First*, God commanded him to write the Law, and *Moses* is accordingly said to have written it. In *Exodus* 34. 27. God, after he had repeated the chief Precepts of the Law, thus speaks to *Moses*, *Write thou these words, for after the Tenour of these words, I have made a Covenant with thee and with* Israel. But in *Exodus* 24. 4. after several Laws

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Laws were made, *Moſes* is ſaid to have written *all the Words of the Lord*; and frequent mention is made of the Book of the Covenant, or Law, as in the ſeventh Verſe of the ſame Chapter. In *Deuteronomy* 28. 58. *If thou wilt not obſerve*, ſays *Moſes*, *to do all the words of this Law, that are written in this Book*, which perhaps he then held in his hands; ſee likewiſe v. 61. and Chap. 29. 20, 27. where the Curſes are ſaid to be writ in it. This does *Moſes* deliver to the *Levites*, Chap. 31. 9. and commands it v. 26. *to be put in the ſide of the Ark, that it may be a Witneſs againſt* Iſrael. Mention is made of the ſame Book, as if it comprehended all the Divine Laws, after the Death of *Moſes*, *Joſhua* 1. 8. where *Joſhua* is commanded by God, not to ſuffer that Book to depart out of his Mouth, that is, perpetually to read it, and adminiſter Juſtice to the People out of the Laws deliver'd in it. See likewiſe Chap. 8. 31.

'Tis true indeed, that the *Jews* by the word *Thorah*, *Law*, are uſed to underſtand the whole *Pentateuch*; nevertheleſs 'tis certain, that it is of a doubtful Signification, and may ſignifie more or fewer Laws. So *Joſhua* 8. 32. it is ſaid, that *Joſhua wrote a Copy of the Law of Moſes*, upon twelve Stones of an Altar, as he was commanded by the Book of the Law. See *Deut.* 27. 2, 3. in all which places *Thorah* ſignifies only a ſmall part of the Law, as Learned Men have obſerved, becauſe it was not poſſible for the whole five Books of *Moſes* to be writ upon

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upon twelve Stones joyn'd together to make a four-ſquare Altar. But 'tis evident from the places above-mentioned, that at leaſt all the Precepts of the Law were written by *Moſes*, and indeed ſo many troubleſom Laws could not be remembred, unleſs their Memories were refreſh'd by a written Book, eſpecially when they began to be obſerved. Some Perſons are of Opinion, that only the Book of *Deuteronomy* is to be underſtood in *Joſhua*, and the above-cited places of *Deuteronomy*; and that afterwards that Book alone was found in the time of *Joſiah* King of *Judah*. But although *Deuteronomy* is the Repetition of the Law, yet many things are there briefly handled; neither are they ſo clearly deſcribed, that the *Iſraelites*, who were none of the acuteſt People in the World, and always inclin'd to Idolatry, could have an accurate Knowledge of the whole Law, only out of that Book; and therefore if *Moſes* deſign'd to have it all obſerv'd, as no body queſtions but he did, he ought to have given the *Iſraelites* a larger Expoſition of it; and this he actually perform'd; for we have ſhown from two places of *Exodus*, that the Laws which we ſee there, were written by him, and not *Deuteronomy* alone. The Book in which he writ them, is called, *The Book of the Covenant*, *Exod.* 24. 7. which after he had ſolemnly read before the People, without queſtion he did not throw it away, ſince it was as it were a publick Inſtrument, wherein were preſerved the Laws of the Covenant made with God. Beſides *Moſes* writ ſome

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ſome other Treatiſes not extant in *Deuteronomy*, of which we ſhall diſcourſe hereafter, and which without doubt he bequeath'd to Poſterity, ſince they have arrived ſafe to our hands. Therefore the above-mentioned Conjecture, that only *Deuteronomy* was left us by *Moſes*, is altogether groundleſs, and contrary to the Sacred Hiſtory.

Matters being thus, no one will doubt that the Laws which are contain'd in *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers* and *Deuteronomy*, are the very ſame that were written by *Moſes*. 'Tis certain, that the Laws, which were written in *Moſes*'s time, were ſtill extant in the Reign of *Joſiah*, as it appears from 2 *Kings* 22. nor can any tolerable Reaſon be aſſign'd, why they were not incorporated at leaſt into the Books of the *Pentateuch*. Therefore whatever Laws we find in the *Pentateuch*, we ought to look upon them as written by *Moſes* himſelf, and conſequently the greateſt part by much of the *Pentateuch* came from the ſame hand. Nay 'tis evident, that ſeveral other things were writ by him.

Secondly, *Moſes* is ſaid, *Deut.* 31. 22. to have written the Song which we find in the following Chapter; and ſince that is ſet down word for word as he made it, we cannot deny that the reſt which belong to the Law, are the very words of *Moſes*, without oppoſing the plaineſt Truths imaginable.

Thirdly, He is in expreſs Terms ſaid to have written ſome part of the Hiſtory of the *Hebrews*, for he tranſmitted in Writing the War againſt the

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the *Amalekites*, and God's Sentence pronounced againſt them, *Exod.* 17.14. After the like manner he writ the ſeveral Manſions of the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, *Numb.* 33.2. Moſes *wrote their goings out according to their Journeys, by the Commandment of the Lord.* And yet that part of their Hiſtory, which we find in that Chapter of *Numbers*, was not of ſo great a Conſequence as to be writ before the reſt; from whence it naturally follows, that the four laſt Books of the *Pentateuch*, at leaſt, were written by *Moſes*, for if he writ *all* the Laws, and the whole Hiſtory of *Iſrael*, he is certainly the Author of theſe Books, wherein nothing elſe is contain'd; for who, after *Moſes* had once written, would attempt to write and model them anew? Indeed if we conſider the frequent Repetitions which we met with in theſe Books, and the great diſorder in the delivery of the Law, we ſhall ſoon be inclin'd to think, that theſe Books are come to our hands, juſt as they were at ſeveral times firſt written by *Moſes*, in that long uncomfortable Pilgrimage in *Arabia Deſerta*: For if they had been compil'd out of *Moſes*'s Memoirs, they had certainly been digeſted into better order, and all the Repetitions had been cut off, as is uſually done in Works of that nature; but if we except a few Paſſages, they have deſcended to Poſterity juſt as they were publiſh'd at firſt, when a full Collection was made of all that *Moſes* writ, and at ſeveral times repeated to the *Iſraelites*, who after all theſe Repetitions, did ſcarce underſtand their own Law ſufficiently. But about the

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middle of this Age, a certain Author that ſhall be nameleſs ſtarted up, whoſe Opinion afterwards found ſome Diſciples, and theſe have been ſo hardy, as to deny that *Moſes* was the Writer of the *Pentateuch*, and pretend to ſhew ſeveral Paſſages in him, which were manifeſtly writ ſince his time. *Aben-ezra* indeed had formerly deliver'd himſelf much to the ſame purpoſe, but worded it ſo warily, and obſcurely, that he is hardly to be underſtood. Now we will here conſider their Reaſons.

III. Their Arguments are partly drawn from the Stile of the whole Book, and partly from particular places. As for the former, they pretend that the difference of Stile, which is eaſily obſerv'd in the *Pentateuch*, plainly ſhews, that it was not written by one hand; for ſome places are writ in a ſhort compendious Stile, full of *Elliptes*, and others in a looſe redundant one. But this Objection ſoon vaniſhes, if we conſider, that the variety we find in theſe Volumes, is rather to be aſcribed to the unrefin'd Condition of the *Hebrew* Tongue, than any diverſity of Writers. Others object, That *Moſes* never ſpeaks of himſelf in the *Pentateuch* in the firſt Perſon, but that all his Actions and Speeches are related in the third; but theſe People are eaſily confuted by the Example of *Xenophon*, *Cæſar* and *Joſephus*, and other Hiſtorians of the firſt Claſs, who whenever they have occaſion to ſpeak of themſelves, alway do it in the third Perſon.

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But 'tis not so easie to solve some Arguments, that are drawn from several places of the *Pentateuch*, although some of them I must own are trivial enough, as will appear by examining them. In the first place they object that passage in *Gen.*2.11,12. *The name of the first is* Pison, *that is it which compasseth the whole Land of* Havilah, *where there is Gold, and the Gold of that Land is good; there is* Bdellium, *and the Onyx-stone.* Now this they say was written by one that lived in *Chaldea*, because *Pison*, as they imagine, is a branch of the *Euphrates*, which after it has washed *Chaldea*, falls into the *Persian* Gulf; and then the Geography of these Countries, according to them, does not seem to be so well known in *Moses*'s time, that so particular an account could be given of them, especially if we consider at what a great distance they lay. But we have shown that the Country of (*b*) *Havilah* was nearer to *Judea*, and that (*b*) *Pison* was perhaps the *Chrysorrhoas* that runs by *Damascus*. But supposing *Chaldea* is here meant, yet by reason of the Merchants that traffick'd from thence into *Egypt*, that Country might very well be known; for if in *Jacob*'s time Caravans of Merchants travelled from *Gilead* into *Egypt*, why might they not likewise come from *Chaldea* too thither?

(*b*) *Bochart*, l. 5. c. 5 *Hieroz.* Part 2. supposes the Land of *Havilah* to be that part of *Arabia* near *Catipha* and *Bahare*, where precious Stones are dug up; and the *Pison* to be that Branch of the *Euphrates*, which *Petrus Textira*, an Eye-witness, affirms to fall into the *Persian* Gulph at *Catipha* near *Bahare*. But our Author places *Havilah* nearer to *Judea*, not far from *Cœlesyria*. In 1 *Sam.* 15.7.

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15. 7. *Saul* is ſaid to have deſtroy'd the *Amalekites* with Fire and Sword, *from* Havilah *until thou comeſt to* Sur, *that is over againſt Egypt*. Now who can believe that *Saul* marched with his Forces an hundred and fifty *German* Miles, (for ſo much 'tis at leaſt, from the Frontier of *Iſrael* to *Havilah*, in *Bochart*'s own Tables) eſpecially if he conſiders how deſtitute of all Proviſions *Arabia Deſerta* was, and that *Saul*'s Army conſiſted of 200000 fighting Men. Beſides if *Havilah* had been more remote than *Sur*, the Sacred Hiſtorian would not have ſaid, that *Saul* waſted the Country of the *Amalekites* from *Havilah* to *Sur*, but from *Sur* to *Havilah*. Therefore *Sur* and *Havilah* he concludes to be the Borders of thoſe People, the former to the South, and the latter to the North. As for the *Piſon*, he is of opinion that ſome Footſteps of it are to be found in *Chryſorrhous*, which riſes near the City of *Damaſcus*, plentifully ſupplies it with Water, and is in a manner wholly loſt in ſeveral little Streams, as *Strabo*, l. 16. and *Pliny*, l. 5. c. 18. tell us. *Petrus Belonius*, Obſervat. l. 2. c. 91. ſays, That *Damaſcus* is ſo abundantly furniſh'd with Water from this River, that not only every private Houſe, but every Garden has a Fountain out of it. Now this Deſcription admirably agrees with the Hebrew word *Phiſon*, which is derived from the Hebrew Root *Phaſha*, *diffuſus fuit*. The Greeks called it *Chryſorrhoas*, becauſe of the Gold Sands found in it, which *Moſes* informs us was very good in the Land of *Havilah*. For the ſame reaſon *Pactolus*, a River of *Lydia*, bore the ſame name.

2. The ſame is ſuſpected of Chap. 10. 8. and the following Verſes, where a larger account is given of *Nimrod* and his Empire, than there is of any other Heads of Families and Countries; and this they imagine might be ſaid more agreeably after the *Babylonian* Captivity, than before the *Iſraelites* had any manner of Commerce with thoſe People. But the mighty Reputation of *Babylon*, and the other Cities there mention'd, ſeem to afford ſufficient Cauſe, why *Moſes* ſhould write a little more particularly about their Beginnings, who otherwiſe of himſelf, is apt enough to make ſuch Diſcoveries of Antiquity.

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Antiquity. As we have frequently (*c*) obſerv'd upon *Geneſis*.

As for what concerns the name of *Nineve*, which ſeems to be of a later date than *Moſes*, as deriving its name from *Ninus* the Son of *Belus*, who according to the exacteſt Computation of Chronology, flouriſh'd about the time of *Deborah*, perhaps the Original of it was otherwiſe than is commonly related. For who in ſo great an Antiquity, and ſo vaſt a defect of ancient Monuments, dare poſitively affirm any thing? Perhaps too ſome one elſe might add it to *Moſes*'s words, as Learned Men have conjectured of ſeveral other Names.

3. 'Tis pretended, that the following paſſage, *And the* Canaanite *was then in the Land*, Chap. 12. 6. could only come from a Writer who lived after the *Canaanites* were turn'd out of their Country. But what Judgment is to be made of theſe words, we have ſufficiently

(*c*) Thus in the 35th Chapter of *Geneſis* v. 8. *Moſes* tells us why the Oak, under which *Rebecca*'s Nurſe was buried, was called *Allon-bachouth*, i. e. *the Oak of Weeping*; not that this Circumſtance was of greater moment than ſeveral others which he omits, as *Jacob*'s coming home to his Parents, *Rebecca*'s death, &c. but only becauſe he had a mind to acquaint his Reader, why this Oak, which laſted to his own time, was called ſo. 'Tis not the moſt unuſeful part of an Antiquary's Buſineſs, to give the Original of Names. Hence it is that we have an account of the name of *Babel*, Chap. 11, 9. of *Zoar*, Chap. 19. 22. of *Bethel*, Chap. 28. 9. Not to inſtance in any more.

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ſhewn in our (*d*) Commentary upon that place; neither is it neceſſary for us to repeat it here, perhaps they might be added by a later hand, after the Expulſion of the *Canaanites* by the Children of *Iſrael*; and perhaps 'tis one of thoſe ſuperfluous Obſervations which frequently occurr in the Sacred Volumes, which might have been omitted, without any Injury done to the Hiſtory.

4. In Chap. 13. 8. we meet with the word *Hebron*, by which name that Town did not go till after *Moſes*'s time, as appears from *Joſhua* 14. 15. Chap. 15. 13. where it is ſaid to have changed its old name *Arba* in the days of *Caleb* and *Joſhua*; and indeed that City ſeems to derive its name *Hebron* from the Nephew of *Caleb*. But Learned Men have rightly obſerved, that this paſſage might be added by another hand ſince the time of *Moſes*, to expound an obſcure Name by one that was better known. See likewiſe Chap. 21. 2.

5. The like Conjecture is drawn from the word *Dan*, which we find Chap. 14. 14. and 'tis urged, that the name of it was *Laiſh* or *Leſhem*, till it was taken by the Children of *Dan*. See

(*d*) Some are of opinion, that out of the eleven Families of the *Canaanites*, ſome of them were called ſo, κατ' ἐξοχὴν, above the reſt, who inhabited theſe places. And 'tis true indeed, that the *Canaanites* are often mentioned as a particular Tribe, ſee *Gen.* 13. 7. Chap. 15. 21. *Exod.* 3. 8, 17. Chap. 33. 2. Chap. 34. 11. and elſewhere. But then they are expreſly ſaid to have lived *near the Sea*, and *near Jordan*, but not at *Sichem*. However perhaps they dwelt here in *Abraham*'s time, and *Moſes* had a regard to that. Our Author prefers this Solution to the reſt.

Joſhua

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Joshua 9.47. But we have handled this Matter in our Commentary, where we plainly make it appear, that it is not well (*e*) grounded.

6. In Chap.20.7.we read the word (*f*) *Nabi, a Prophet,* which notwithstanding seems not to have been in use till after *Moses*'s Age, 1 *Sam.*9.9. After all, perhaps the meaning of the Sacred Historian may be this, That not so much the word *Nabi* was left off in the time of *Saul,* as that it was not used in that Phrase, *Let us go to the* Seer.

7. *Moses* speaking of the Mountain, where *Abraham* was to have offer'd up his Son as a

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(*e*) *Josephus* relating this History, *lib.* 1. *c.* 10. tells us, That *Abraham* attack'd the *Assyrians*, ἀφὶ Δάνον, *near Dan*, and adds, *For this is the name of one of the heads of* Jordan. If this is true, 'tis certain that this Head was so called, long before the City Laish obtained its new name; and afterwards when the Children of *Dan* possessed themselves of these places, that not only this Fountain, but the neighbouring City took the same name. A place may happen to receive the same Appellation for two several causes, as for Instance, *Beersheba*, i. e. *the Well of the Oath*, was so called from two Covenants that were made near it. See *Gen.*21.31.Chap.26.33. And this might be the case of *Dan*.

(*f*) This word seems to have been in use with the *Hebrews* at first; afterwards the word *Roe a Seer* was more commonly used; but at last *Nabi* came in fashion again. *Horace de Arte Poeticâ* has a passage which is very applicable to this purpose.

Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere, cadentque
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus.

The same Fate has befallen this word, which that judicious Poet observes to have happened to several more: It was used in *Moses*'s time; under the Judges it grew out of date, and after them was again revived.

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Sacrifice, has the following words, Chap. 22. 14, *And* Abraham *called the name of that place* Jehovah-jireh, *as it is ſaid to this day, in the Mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen.* Some are of opinion, that this was the Mountain *Moria* upon which the Temple was built, and which did not go by that name till the Temple was erected upon it. But this is a meer Conjecture, and although *Moriah* and *Jehovah-Jireh* ſeem to ſignifie the ſame thing, yet it does not follow from thence that 'tis but one name. With no greater reaſon on their ſide do others obſerve, that *Moſes* could not be the Author of that Proverbial Saying (for ſo they call it) *Proſpicietur in monte Jehovæ*, ſince the Perſon that added it to the Text, ſeems to ſpeak of it as if it were ſtill uſed in his time. But why might not *Moſes* ſay, that this Proverb was in uſe *etiamnum hodie*, ſince perhaps this Form was uſed, from the days of *Abraham* down to *Moſes*. This I am certain of, that there is nothing in the whole Matter, which does not fitly agree with *Moſes's* time. There was a convenient diſtance enough between *Abraham* and *Moſes*, for the latter to take notice, that the aforeſaid Form, of which *Abraham* was the Author, continued till his own time. Nay, if the Interval had not been quite ſo great, yet *Moſes* might very warrantably expreſs himſelf after that manner, ſince this Form is ſometimes uſed by thoſe that writ but a few years after, of which we find

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find two Examples in St. *Matthew*, Chap. 27. 8. Chap. 28. 15. as others have obſerved before me. To theſe we may add ſuch-like paſſages out of St. *Jerom*, for he, ſpeaking of the Eccleſiaſtical Writers of his own Age, expreſſes himſelf after the ſame manner, *Sæbadius* Biſhop of *Agennum* in *France*.—*Vivit uſque hodie, lives till now, or to this day, decrepitâ ſenectute*, μέχρι νυῦ ζῇ, as the Greek Interpreter has rendered it. *Didymus* of *Alexandria*—*Vivit uſque hodie, and has paſſed the eightieth year of his Age*; πεντήκοντα ἄχρι τοῦδε. *Epiphanius* Biſhop of *Salamis* in *Cyprus*— *Supereſt uſque hodie*, and in his old Age is writing ſeveral Books. *Eunomius* of the *Arian* Party, *uſque hodie vivere dicitur*. *Priſcillianus* Biſhop of *Abila*, *uſque hodie*, to this very day, is accuſed by ſome, of the *Gnoſtick* Hereſie, though others maintain that he was not guilty of what is laid to his Charge. *Priſcillianus* was ſlain by *Maximus* the Tyrant, but ſeven years before St. *Jerom* writ this. We have touched upon this ſomewhat largely, becauſe ſeveral places in the Sacred Hiſtorians are illuſtrated by this Obſervation.

8. Likewiſe they object the name of *Migdal Heder*, *Gen.* 35. 21. that is, *The Tower of the Flock*; by which name is ſuppoſed to be meant, a Tower upon one of the Gates of *Jeruſalem*, which was called *the Sheep-gate*; but this is uncertain; however if we may believe latter Ages, *the Tower of the Flock* did not belong

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to *Jeruſalem*. Conſult our (g) Obſervations upon this place of *Geneſis*. Nor is there any reaſon why this place ſhould not retain its ancient name in following Ages.

9. They ſuppoſe that *Moſes* could not poſſibly write, Chap. 36. 31, nor reckon up ſo many Kings of *Edom*. *Now theſe were the Kings that reigned in* Edom, *before there was any King in Iſrael*. After this follow the names of eight Kings, who reign'd ſucceſſively one after another, and make as many Generations as there were from *Jacob* to *Obed*, Grand-father to *David*, and Contemporary to *Saul* the firſt King of *Judea*; ſince from *Jacob* to *Moſes* there are only four, taking *Moſes* into the account. Now ſome anſwer, That *Moſes* foreknew that the *Iſraelites* would ſet up Kings over themſelves, to which purpoſe they cite *Deuteronomy*, Chap. 17. 14. But is it credible, that God likewiſe revealed to him, how many Kings the *Edomites* were to have, and by what Names they were to be called, before the *Jewiſh* Theocracy was turned into a Kingly

(g) There was a Tower at *Jeruſalem*, or not far from that City, of the ſame name, as we are informed by *Micah* 4. 8. St. *Jerom*, following the Tradition of the Inhabitants in his time, places it not far from *Bethlehem* in his Epitaph of *Paula*, who after ſhe had viſited *Bethlehem*, *Not far from thence*, ſays ſhe, *ſhe deſcended to the Tower of* Ader, i. e. *of the Flock*, *near which* Jacob *fed his Flocks, and the Shepherds watching by night, were ſo happy as to hear, Glory be to God on high*, &c. Which as it might be true, ſo it receives no great Confirmation from ſo Fabulous a Voucher as Tradition is.

Govern-

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Government? Now *Moſes* no where tells us, that ſuch a Revelation happened to him, and indeed whoever will read over the nine Verſes, wherein the Succeſſion of the Kings of *Edom* is contained, will ſoon be ſatisfied that there is no Prophecy in the caſe; for the Sacred Hiſtorian there ſpeaks as of a thing paſt and gone, that nothing can be more clearly expreſs'd: For what more evident Teſtimony can there be given that the thing was already paſt, than theſe Phraſes, *And he died, and there reigned in his ſtead?* Some body, whoſe name has eſcaped me, ſolves it another way; for he humbly ſuppoſes that theſe Kings reign'd at the ſame time in different places; and for my part I humbly ſuppoſe he never read this Chapter, his Head being certainly fill'd with Metaphyſical Contemplations. To deal ingeniouſly with the Reader, the beſt way to get clear of this Difficulty, will be to own frankly, that theſe nine Verſes from V. 31 to 39, were added by ſome one who lived after the Kingly Government was ſet up in *Iſrael*.

10. Some have objected, that *Canaan* is called *the Land of the Hebrews*, Chap. 40. 15. which, in propriety of Speech, could be ſaid only at that time, when the *Hebrews* had poſſeſſed themſelves of it; and that therefore the Sacred Hiſtorian, who was later than *Moſes*, accommodated *Joſeph*'s way of ſpeaking to the Stile of his own time. But we have

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have (*b*) anſwered this Objection in our Commentary.

11. In *Exodus* Chap. 6. after the Sacred Hiſtorian has inform'd us of *Aaron*'s and *Moſes*'s Pedigree, he thus goes on v. 26. *Theſe are* THAT Aaron *and* Moſes *to whom the Lord ſaid, bring out the Children of* Iſrael *from the Land of* Egypt *according to their Armies. Theſe are* THEY *that ſpoke to* Pharaoh *King of* Egypt *to bring out the Children of* Iſrael *from* Egypt. *Theſe are* THAT Moſes *and* Aaron. Now we do not urge the third Perſon here, ſay ſome, which 'tis plain ſeveral Hiſtorians have uſed, but the Demonſtrative Pronouns *that* and *they*, which *Moſes* would ſcarce make uſe of while he was alive, and writing of himſelf. But we muſt here call to mind, that *Moſes* did not only write to his own Age, wherein his Father and Grand-father were well known, but likewiſe to the following Ages, to whom he ſeems in this place to direct his Diſcourſe, and not to his Contemporaries, who knew

(*b*) 'Tis plain enough, ſays our Author upon this place, that after *Joſhua* had led the *Iſraelites* into *Canaan*, all that Country might be called, and really was called, *the Land of the Hebrews*: But if we ſhould take it in this Sence, it would follow that this Paſſage was written after the time of *Joſhua*, as ſome have believed. If we would have it written by *Moſes*, we muſt only underſtand ſome part of *Canaan* where the *Hebrews* generally fed their Flocks without any diſturbance. For though they were Strangers, and wandered from one place to another, yet thoſe Fields might properly enough be ſaid to belong to them, where they had pitch'd their Tents for ſeveral years, with the Conſent of the old Inhabitants. Now it appears by the Book of *Geneſis*, that they ſojourn'd for the greateſt part about *Mamre* and *Hebron* as far as *Sichem*, partly by the Permiſſion of the Natives, and partly by Force,

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all theſe Particulars well enough. It was of Conſequence for them to know, that *Aaron* the Brother of *Moſes* was deſcended from *Levi*, and that he was the firſt Head of the Sacerdotal Families; therefore it ought not to ſeem ſtrange to any one, that in this place *Moſes* and *Aaron* are as it were pointed at, and their Genealogy ſhown to the *Iſraelites* of future Ages.

12. The words of *Exodus* 16.35. are alledged, which they pretend could not be written till after the death of *Moſes*. *And the Children of* Iſrael *did eat Manna forty years, until they came to a Land inhabited: They did eat Manna until they came unto the Borders of the Land of* Canaan. For it appears from the fifth Chapter of *Joſhua*, that Manna did not ceaſe till after the death of *Moſes*. To this ſome anſwer, That *Moſes* fore-knew, as is evident from *Numbers* 14. 33. that the Manna would ceaſe after the end of forty years, ſo ſoon as the *Iſraelites* entred the Land of *Canaan*. But this is here related, and not foretold, and therefore *Moſes* uſes the Preterperfect Tenſe *Comederunt*, *did eat*: For which reaſon I ſhould rather chuſe to ſay, that this Verſe, as well as ſome more, has been added to the Text by way of Parentheſis, occaſioned by what immediately goes before, where mention is made of an Omer full of Manna to be laid up in the Ark.

13. Some Perſons deny the following Verſe to belong to *Moſes*, *But an Omer is the tenth part of an Ephah*; becauſe when a Meaſure is in uſe, it is not cuſtomary to define it; and therefore they

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they believe that after the *Hebrews* were ſcatter'd into ſeveral Countries, and conſequently began to uſe the Meaſures of other Nations, this was purpoſely written, that they might underſtand which Meaſure was meant in this Hiſtory. The ſame is obſerved about their Money, *Numb.* 3.47. Chap. 18. 16. But it does not appear, that the Jews uſed any other Meaſures in *Paleſtine*, ſo as to make it neceſſary to define the old Meaſures; nor does an *Ephah* ſeem to be better known than an *Omer*. But *Moſes*, who inſtituted the *Jewiſh* Commonwealth, might deſignedly give a ſhort Deſcription of the Coins and Meaſures, to the end that they might not afterwards be changed.

14. The Sacred Hiſtorian thus begins, *Deut.* 1. 1. *Theſe are the words which* Moſes *ſpoke to all* Iſrael *on this ſide* Jordan *in the Wilderneſs.* From whence they gather that the Writer of this Book was then in *Canaan*. But we have diſcuſſed the Ambiguity of the Particle *Bheber* upon * that place of *Deuteronomy* to which we refer the Reader.

* M. *le Clerk* has promiſed the World a Paraphraſe and Comment upon the other four Books of *Moſes*, but they have not ſeen the light as yet.

15. In the ſame Book Chap. 2. 12. there are ſome words which they pretend could never come from *Moſes*, *The* Horims *dwelt in* Sur *before time, but the Children of* Elau *ſucceeded them when they had deſtroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their ſtead, as* Iſrael *did unto the Land of his Poſſeſſion.* But at that time when *Moſes*

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Moſes writ this, two Tribes and a half had already ſetled themſelves near the head of *Jordan*, and turn'd out the old Inhabitants, and *Moſes* had an Eye to that.

16. Chap. 3. 11. Thus the Sacred Writer ſpeaks of the King of *Baſan*. *For only* Og *King of* Baſan *remain'd of the remnant of Giants, behold his Bedſted was a Bedſted of Iron: Is it not in* Rabbah *of the Children of* Ammon? *Nine Cubits was the length thereof, and four Cubits the breadth of it.* Now ſome can ſcarce believe, that it was poſſible for *Moſes* to ſpeak thus of a Man that was lately dead, and overcome by the *Iſraelites*, and whoſe Bed was rather in *Baſan*, of which Territory he was King, than among the *Ammonites* who were none of his Subjects. But *Moſes* had a mind to give a particular account of a thing, which was well known at that time indeed, but would have been unknown to Poſterity, unleſs he had deliver'd it in writing. As for what concerns the Bed, how it came to be carried into another Kingdom, who can tell? But ſince there is no Abſurdity in this Story, nothing can be gather'd from a thing, the reaſon of which is altogether unknown.

17. In the ſame Chapter, v. 14. we meet with the following paſſage, Jair *the Son of* Manaſſeh *took all the Country of* Argob *unto the Coaſts of* Geſhuri *and* Maacathi, *and call'd them after his own name* Baſhan-Havoth-jair *unto this day*. We ſhall handle this matter more at large in our Commentary. In the mean time if this were added by a later hand, yet it would not follow from

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from thence, that the greateſt part of the *Pentateuch* was not written by *Moſes*.

18. We will not deny the laſt Chapter of *Deuteronomy* to be writ by ſome one elſe, where *Moſes*'s going up to Mount *Nebo*, and his death, are related, and yet all the foregoing Chapters are not therefore to be given away from him. We may eaſily ſuppoſe that this Book was ſupplied by another hand, which had been in a manner imperfect, if it had not ended with the death of *Moſes*. But thoſe Jews that are of opinion, that *Moſes* foretold all theſe things, as being aſſiſted by a Prophetical Spirit, do not deſerve to be heard. What can be ſaid more plainly, to make us underſtand that theſe things were written long after *Moſes*'s death, than what we find in the three laſt Verſes?

IV. Hence we may gather from theſe eighteen places, which are commonly brought to prove the *Pentateuch* to be of a later date, that moſt of them are doubtful, and conſequently ought not to be made uſe of as Arguments to prove theſe five Books to belong to another Age. Very few of them manifeſtly ſeem to be added by another hand, and do not in the leaſt hinder, why we ſhould not aſcribe theſe Volumes to *Moſes*. After the ſame manner, ſome ancient Grammarians tell us, there are ſeveral Verſes here and there inſerted into *Homer*'s Poems, yet no one from thence takes occaſion to deny that the *Iliads* and the *Odyſſes* were written by *Homer*. We muſt not imagine that in former Ages they had

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had such plenty of Books, or so many Copies of the same Book as now we have; and so it might easily happen, that in succeeding Times one of the Prophets might make some Additions to *Moses*, which afterwards were incorporated with all the Copies.

Indeed if it did not otherwise evidently appear, that the greatest part by far of the *Pentateuch* was written by *Moses*, I confess there would be great weight in the above-mention'd Objections, to incline us to believe that these Volumes were written much later than is commonly pretended; but since we have proved it beyond all manner of doubt, that almost all the *Pentateuch* belongs to *Moses*, we have no reason to ascribe those Books to any one but him.

V. It has been long controverted among Learned Men, who it was that made these Additions which we find in the Books of *Moses*, and they have gone upon various Conjectures. Some would have him to be *Joshua*, others *Esdras*, and lastly, others to be the under Scribe among the *Hebrews*, but this is only guessing, for they bring no Reasons to enforce their Opinions. Because *Joshua* succeeded *Moses*, therefore some People fancy it was he that inserted those Passages that seem to carry Discoveries of a later Age. Again, others ascribe this to *Esdras*, who is, by the Jews, said to have regulated the Sacred Volumes, and by some, to have made them up again out of his Memory after they were certainly lost. But since these different Hypotheses are supported

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by no competent Witneſſes, that is to ſay, ſuch as flouriſhed in the ſame Times, or ſuch as might have learn'd the Truth out of the Memoirs of their Contemporaries, they may be as eaſily rejected, as they are brought upon the Stage. Nor is a multitude of Authors, who lived ſeveral Ages after, and never cite any that are older than themſelves, and who do but tranſcribe one another, of any weight. *Eſdras* is only called *a Scribe*, and *a ready Scribe in the Law of* Moſes, in thoſe Books that go under his Name. See chiefly the ſeventh Chapter of *Eſdras*, and this ſeems to have given occaſion to that Fable, of his reſtoring the Sacred Books; though Γραμματεὺς rather ſignifies a Learned Man, as we might eaſily demonſtrate, than one that is buſied in tranſcribing of Books. Several uncertain things have been poſitively aſſerted concerning theſe *under Scribes*, as we ſhall ſhew at a more proper place upon the following Books, but this is the moſt uncertain of all, *viz.* That they inſerted the above-mention'd Additions into the *Moſaical* Volumes.

And therefore after a diligent Examination of the Matter, we ingenuouſly own that here we do not know what to conclude; perhaps one of thoſe who are already ſuppoſed, perhaps ſome one elſe, and perhaps ſeveral hands have at ſeveral times inſerted theſe things into *Moſes*. Therefore we can have no ſurer or ſafer Sanctuary here, than prudently to ſuſpend our Judgments; by which conduct, if we do not diſcover the Truth, yet at leaſt it is not excluded from the Mind.

VI. If

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VI. If we were able to discover all the Designs that *Moses* proposed to himself in writing, this would be of much greater Importance towards the better Interpretation of his Volumes; for these Books are not like the Works of Mathematicians, where we find nothing but general Propositions, that have a relation neither to certain Places, nor Times, nor Men, and do not allude to any thing but the business in hand. *Moses* writ for the Benefit and Instruction of a particular People called the *Jews*, though I do not deny that by the means of Divine Providence, his Books were afterwards serviceable to innumerable other Nations. Upon this account he laid abundance of things merely for the use of that People, which he had omitted, if he had not been influenced by this Consideration. He likewise had an Eye to the Opinions and Customs of the neighbouring Nations, which he assented to, or rejected, according as they agreed with Reason and the Truth.

We know indeed, from the nature of the thing it self, that the general aim of his writing, was to teach the *Israelites* the Worship of one God, and to deliver them the Laws which he had received from him; but it is to be wished, that we particularly knew for what Reasons he followed one certain Method in Writing more than another, and what he chiefly had an eye to in that Abridgment of the ancient History which he has left behind him. From hence perhaps we might be able to comprehend why he omits several

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Tranſactions, to give us a Narration of ſome other Events, which are not, as we imagine, of ſo great Importance; why he uſed ſuch and ſuch Words and Expreſſions, why he mentions ſome things only *en paſſant*; and treats of others in a more copious and frequent manner; with other things of the ſame nature, which would give conſiderable light to many obſcure places.

Were it poſſible for any one ſo to ſecure his Readers, before they were admitted to the peruſal of *Moſes*, that they ſhould find no rugged places, or at leaſt but few, that were hard to be underſtood; ſo univerſal an Obligation could never be requited with Thanks and Commendations enough. For Example, No one reads the ſhort *Prolegomena* which *Aſconius Pedianus* has given us, before ſome of *Cicero*'s Orations againſt *Verres*, but he would with all his heart be at any Expence, that all the reſt of his Orations were recommended and illuſtrated by ſuch Prefaces. For thoſe Prefaces or Arguments are no ſmall helps towards the underſtanding of *Tully*, and would be infinitely more ſerviceable to the World, if they were but longer.

Now ſince we are deſtitute of ſuch Aſſiſtances, by reaſon of the ſhortneſs of *Moſes*'s Hiſtory, and the great Scarcity of ancient Oriental Authors, and can by no means ſupply the Defect of thoſe things which are neceſſary to ſuch a Deſign, it remains that we muſt often be involv'd in the greateſt Difficulties. And as I often conſidered of this Matter, when I had the *Moſaical* Writings in

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my hands, so I was resolved to collect and gather out of *Moses* himself, whatever might be pertinently said upon this occasion. I flatter'd my self that I should not be so rigorously censur'd, if I did not answer the Reader's Expectation, as if I only raised his Appetite, and did not endeavour to satisfie him; for this reason I made no scruple to set what follows before my Commentary, whatever the Learned World may think of it.

VII. That no body may mistake me, or expect to find what I never promised, I do not here inquire what was *Moses's*, or rather God's Intention in delivering the Law, which we shall consider when we come to the particular Laws, but what was *Moses's* chief and principal aim, in writing and publishing the *Pentateuch*, such as we now have it. All Men, as we observed before, know well enough that *Moses* chiefly writ to teach the People of the Jews, that only one God was to be worshipped, and after what manner that was to be done; but we must more distinctly shew, what method he took to reach that mark, (if I may be allow'd so to express my self) and what other ends he might possibly have.

1. We must chiefly, and in the first place remember, that it never was in *Moses's* thoughts, to write the Annals of all Mankind down to his own time; but only to select those Passages out of the Histories of former Ages, which agreed with his general Design before mention'd, or some other particular by-ends. Hence we find

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that nothing can be ſhorter than his Hiſtory is, from the Creation of the World to *Abraham*, ſince 'tis diſpatch'd in the firſt eleven Chapters, which make up about one fifth part of the Book of *Geneſis*, and yet the Hiſtory before *Abraham* includes above two thouſand years, but from *Abraham* to the death of *Joſeph* where the Book of *Geneſis* ends, 'tis not quite three hundred years.

Nay, out of this General Hiſtory of two thouſand years and upwards, he only ſelects a few things, that were either neceſſary to the Series and Order of the following Tranſactions, or might ſerve to inſtruct the Minds of the *Iſraelites* in Piety and Vertue. And this is the reaſon why he omits an infinite number of things, which the Curioſity of the Reader would be apt to demand a *detail* of, and only preſents us with a naked Chronology of the firſt Times. However he occaſionally ſprinkles ſome things, which he imagined might more eaſily induce the *Iſraelites* to obſerve the Law, and therefore not only tells them that the World was created, and that it was made in the compaſs of ſix days, but that God reſted on the (*i*) Seventh, as we find expreſly in *Gen.* 2. 1, 2, 3. (becauſe this day was to be kept Holy, and 'twas chiefly celebrated in the Law in remembrance of the Creation) that the Jews might underſtand why they were ſo ſolemnly commanded to reſt on that day. For the

(*i*) The Learned Maſter of the *Charter-houſe* in his *Archæologiæ* has explained himſelf much to the ſame purpoſe, as M. *le Clerk* does here in this Paragraph.

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same reason, Chap. 1. 14. *Moses*, where he mentions the several uses that are made of the Sun and Moon's motion, observes by the by that they shewed *Seasons* or solemn Festivals. When he might have contracted the History of the first Sin, as he does many more, and only said that our first Parents were not in all respects obedient to God, for which reason he inflicted upon them all those Evils that now visit Mankind, he chose perhaps to enlarge more copiously upon it in the third Chapter, because it might be useful for the *Israelites*, who were commanded to abstain from several Animals and Fruits, to know, that the first Sin proceeded from Intemperance; that so this Example might deter them from being seduced with the outward Appearance of any prohibited Flesh or Fruit.

2. *Moses*'s Design was, to write the History of the Jewish Nation from its first Founder *Abraham*, who was commanded by God to go out of *Chaldæa* into the Land of *Canaan*, where properly and in Truth the Original of the *Hebrews* is to be sought. For while *Abraham* was beyond the *Euphrates*, he liv'd among the other *Gentiles*, but in *Canaan*, living apart from all the rest, he did in some manner represent a particular Nation by his Family. This is the reason why *Moses*, from that time, omits all other Nations, and only speaks of *Abraham* and his Posterity, although no question is to be made, but that innumerable Events worthy of remembrance happen'd in other Kingdoms. As for instance, It had been

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worthy the relating, what ſort of a Prieſthood that of *Melchiſedeck* was, and how he maintain'd the Worſhip of the High God among a People that were abandoned to Idolatry. Nevertheleſs becauſe theſe things related to the Hiſtory of another Nation, *Moſes*, who ſtill keeps to his purpoſe, omits them. From hence we may learn by the bye, that we muſt not always draw an Argument from his Silence; and that for inſtance, we cannot affirm that all other Nations were forſaken by God Almighty, merely becauſe *Moſes* ſays nothing of God's Favours to them.

3. He ſeems likewiſe to have deſign'd to reform the Manners of the *Iſraelites*, not only by direct and open Precepts, but by a more oblique (*k*) way, of inſtructing them by Narrations. It was a common Cuſtom with the *Iſraelites*, to caſt off their Wives at pleaſure, which by reaſon of the Hardneſs of their Hearts, he would not abſolutely forbid, but hints to them, That *it was not ſo from the beginning; and that whoever could receive this ſaying might. Therefore*, ſays he, *a Man ſhall leave his Father and his Mother, and ſhall cleave to his Wife, and they twain ſhall be one Fleſh*, Chap. 2. 24. Compare our Saviour's words, *Matt.* 19. 4, &c. with theſe.

Polygamy too was in Faſhion among them, which he could not openly attack, without

(*k*) Thus our Author ſuppoſes, that to diſſwade the Jews from taking to themſelves Wives out of a ſtrange Nation, he let them ſee, how Fatal to the Sons of *Seth* their Marriages with the Daughters of *Cain* proved, *Gen.* 6. 2.

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alienating the Hearts of all the People from him. However in that compendious History of the *Antediluvian* Ages, especially where he mentions the Posterity of *Cain*, he judg'd it *à propos*, not to omit Chap. 4. that the first Instance of *Polygamy* was in that Generation, and privately Insinuates, that *Lamech*, who first assum'd that Liberty, was of a fierce Disposition, and despised his other Wives, as appears by his History.

4. *Moses* endeavours, in this History, to raise an Aversion in the *Israelites* to the Fables of their Neighbours, and consequently to their Religion, which for the most part was built upon them; and this seems probable for the following Reasons: He not only teaches, that the World was created, which the neighbouring Nations seem to have believed, or rather knew it, from ancient Monuments; but he likewise shews how many *Generations* there were from the Beginning of the World down to his own time, and reckons every particular Person so *generated*, to oppose the Truth to that mighty number of *Generations*, which the *Egyptians* pretended to have been in their own Country. For not to mention what the Learned Sir *John Marsham* has collected relating to this Head, *Herodotus*, who lived about the middle of the Fourth Chiliad of the World, according to the Computation of the *Hebrews*, tells us in his Second Book, Chap. 142. that the *Egyptians* pretended, after the Gods had ceased to reign in *Egypt*, that there reach'd to his Age three hundred forty five Generations, which make

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make up Ten thouſand four hundred ſeventy three years. See the Boaſting of the *Egyptians*, *Ezek.* 29. 3. and our Annotations upon *Numbers* 13. 23. But *Moſes* ſhews, *Gen.* 10. 6. that after the Flood, *Egypt* was Peopled by the Poſterity of *Cham*, who came thither out of *Babylon*. The *Egyptians* too Romanced very much concerning the Generation of Men in their Country, and about the Flood, which may be found in *Diodorus*, L. 1. They boaſted that they were the (*l*) Inventors of all things, as the ſame Authors tell us, moſt of which *Moſes* confutes by the bye, giving a quite different Account of things, and plainly ſhews that others were the Inventors of them. For Example, The *Egyptians* aſcrib'd Agriculture, and the Invention of Squeezing Wine from the Grape to their *Oſiris*, which belongs to *Noah*, as we are inform'd by *Moſes*, Chap. 9. 20. The *Phœnicians* too had publiſh'd ſeveral Fictions, if *Philo Byblius's Sanchoniathon* has given us a true account of their Theology, a Fragment of which is to be ſeen in *Euſebius's Præparatio Evangelica*, l. 1. cap. 10. which *Moſes* contradicts, as will ſoon appear by comparing the two Hiſtories.

5. He ſeems likewiſe, by not only Writing his Law, but Publiſhing it, and commanding it to be

(*l*) So they aſcribed the Invention of Muſick to one *Thoth* a Friend of *Oſiris*, who, as *Diodorus* tells us, l. 1. invented the Harp with three ſtrings, but *Moſes* gives it to *Jubal*. They likewiſe pretended, that under the Reign of *Oſiris*, the Art of working in Braſs and Iron was found out in *Thebais*. See the ſame Hiſtorian, lib. 1.

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read every Seventh Year, *Deut.* 31. 10. tacitly reprehend the Conduct of the *Egyptian* Priests, who had several secret Rites, and hidden Doctrines, which it was not lawful to discover to the People. (*m*) See our Notes upon *Gen.* 41. 8.

6. Most of the Oriental Nations not only boasted of their Antiquity, as *Diodorus Siculus* has observ'd in his first Book, but likewise extravagantly praised their Founders, and reckon'd them among their Gods, as after *Diodorus*, *Herodotus* in the place above-mention'd, and *Manetho* in *Eusebius's Prep. Evang.* l. 2. c. 1. and several others have remarked. Now *Moses* shews them to be descended of *Cham*, *Noah's* third Son, who was so far from Meriting a place among the Divinities, that he could not be esteem'd a Good Man. He likewise observes all under one, Chap. 9. 22. that the *Canaanites* were descended from that Race which God had curs'd. Nor did he forget, Chap. 19. 37, 38. to take notice that the *Ammonites* and the *Moabites* came from Incestuous Parents. And as the *Edomites* might perhaps boast that they proceeded from the eldest Son, he exposes his Scandalous Selling of his Birth-right, Chap. 25. Nay, perhaps he had this in his Head, when he observes that the younger Children were often prefer'd to the elder, as we

(*m*) The *Egyptian* Priests had not only their Mysteries and Sacred Doctrines, which they did not hold it Lawful to reveal to the People, but peculiar Letters or Characters which none but themselves could read. Vid. *Herod.* L. 2. *Diod. Biblioth.* L. 3.

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have obſerv'd upon (*x*) *Gen.* 48. 19. therefore it is highly Credible, that *Moſes* had a mind to mortifie the Pride of the neighbouring Nations, and furniſh the *Iſraelites* with ſome Topicks to upbraid them with.

7. Laſtly, While he writes the Hiſtory of the *Hebrews*, although 'tis true he enlarges more copiouſly upon their Affairs, yet we muſt not believe (and the Brevity of it is a convincing Argument of what I here maintain,) that he never deſign'd to write full Annals. It appears from the Sacred Hiſtory it ſelf, that ſeveral things are omitted by him, which however are told in another place, though they had no relation to it. He ſays nothing of the Idolatry of the Anceſtors of the *Iſraelites*, when they were beyond the *Eu-*

(*x*) 'Tis remarkable enough (ſays M. *le Clerk* upon this place) that *Moſes* takes care all along in his Hiſtory, wherein he omits innumerable Particulars of the greateſt Conſequence, to obſerve that ſeveral Firſt-begotten Sons either forfeited their Birth-right, or were inferior to their younger Brothers in all good Qualities. Thus *Cain*, the Firſt-born, was not ſo acceptable to God, as his Brother *Abel*, and at laſt loſt the Privileges of Primogeniture, *Gen.* 4. *Shem* ſeems to be preferr'd to *Japhet*, *Gen.* 5. & 9. *Abraham* to *Haran*, *Gen.* 11. *Iſaac* to *Iſhmael*, *Gen.* 19. and *Jacob* is ſet before *Iſaiah*. Amongſt the Sons of *Jacob*, *Reuben* loſes his Birth-right, which was partly conferred upon *Judah*, and partly upon *Joſeph*, and *Joſeph*'s younger Son is preferred to the Elder. If it were lawful for us to interpoſe our own Conjectures, continues he, we might with probability enough, ſuppoſe that the *Moabites*, the *Ammonites*, *Iſhmaelites* and *Edomites*, who were all deſcended from the eldeſt Sons, did, upon that Score, claim a Right over the *Iſraelites*, where they happened to be more Powerful than them: For which reaſon *Moſes*, who writ chiefly for the ſake of the Jews, often took notice, that the elder Brothers were, not without good cauſe, Poſtpon'd to the younger: Nay, *Moſes* himſelf, who was the younger of the two, was preferr'd to his Brother *Aaron*, *Non ſine aliquâ fratris invidiâ*, Numb. 12.

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phrates, of which *Joshua* 24. 2. makes mention, unless perhaps it is obscurely hinted at in *Gen.* 31. 53. He is utterly silent of the Idolatry of the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, which nevertheless *Ezekiel* the Prophet lays to their Charge, Chap. 20. 7, 8. He has likewise omitted a particular sort of Superstition, into which they fell when they were in the Wilderness, of which *Amos* 5. 25, 26. gives us an account. But for what reasons, we are wholly in the dark.

But since by these Examples, and indeed by the Work it self, 'tis evident that *Moses* did not write Annals, we must less admire to see him neglect the order of Time, which ought to be observ'd in a larger History. For 'tis well known, that in such sorts of Histories, as Lives are, the true Series of things is never accurately kept, as we find in the most celebrated Biographers of the *Greeks* and *Latins*, *Plutarch*, *Diogenes*, *Laertius*, *Corn. Nepos* and *Suetonius*.

These seem to be the particular Designs of *Moses*, these his more secret Ends of Writing, besides that universal and manifest End, which the Reader finds at first sight, namely, of bringing the *Israelites* to the Worship of the *only true God*. They that remember these Hints, as they are reading of *Moses*, will discover several more things than we have here mention'd, as we have likewise taken notice of many things in our Commentary, which we did not think convenient to repeat here.

Disserta-

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Dissertation IV.

Concerning the Temptation of Eve *by the Serpent.*

I. *How differently Interpreters have explained this History: Some affirm that it was a real Serpent.* II. *Others look upon the whole to be Allegorical; or,* III. *Pretend that the Devil was signified by that Name: Or,* IV. *That he informed the body of a Serpent.* V. *That the manner how Sin entered into the World cannot certainly be known.* VI. *Another Explication of this Passage.* VII. *Why the Serpent is called* Subtle. VIII. *The meaning of the word* Naked. IX. *Why a Punishment was inflicted upon the Serpent.*

I. SOME of the Ancient Jews are of Opinion, that the whole passage in *Moses* is to be understood of a real Serpent, which Creature they imagine to have formerly had the Gift of Speech, so that *Eve* might very well understand him. *Josephus* in the first Book of his Antiquities, *c.* 1. pretends, that at that time Ὁμοφώνων ἁπάντων τῶν ζώων ἦν, *all Creatures using the same Language*, and consequently being indued with Reason and Under-

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Understanding, the Serpent, incited by Envy, tempted *Eve* to Sin, and among other things received this signal Punishment, *viz.* That he should be deprived of his Feet, and ever after crawl upon the Ground. *Aben ezra*, and several *Rabbins*, interpret this place after the same manner. To explain my self impartially, If *Moses* had been of this Opinion, he could not have spoken more plainly to the purpose, than now he does: For in the first place, he describes the Serpent to have been the most Subtle of all Creatures: Next, That he employ'd his Subtlety in Deceiving our First Parent, and held a Dialogue with her, as if he had been a Master of Reasoning. Lastly, That his creeping upon his Belly was imposed upon him as a Punishment. *Josephus* himself could not have more fully explained his Sentiments, than *Moses* has done.

II. But other Persons, who were *Jews* likewise, not being able to digest so many unpalatable things, as Speech and Reason attributed to a Brute, and the Serpent's losing his Feet, although *Moses* seem'd to express as much in the plainest manner imaginable, yet rather than understand him so, they chose to commit Violence upon his words, and betake themselves to Allegory. *Philo* indeed, in his Treatise *De mundi opificio*, and elsewhere, denies that these *were Fables and Fictions, wherein the Poets and Sophisters take so great a delight.* Nevertheless he owns them to be *Figurative Documents, that are to be explain'd Allegorically, in order to find out the hidden meaning of them.* And

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And lastly affirms, That it may be rightly conjectured, that the Serpent is a Symbol of Pleasure, which Argument he handles more copiously afterwards. *Maimonides* also Part 2. *Mor. Nev.* c. 29. supposes, that these Passages are to be expounded by way of Allegory, and some of the later *Rabbins* declare themselves to be of the same Opinion.

III. But others that have a just Indignation to this Libertine way of Interpreting the Scripture, which wholly depends upon the Fancy of the Interpreter, and yet not able with *Josephus* to follow the literal Sense, have fallen into different Sentiments, none of which labours with fewer Inconveniences than the two above-cited Opinions. Some Divines of no mean Rank in the Learned World, maintain, that it was not a Serpent, properly so called, which appeared, but that the Devil was signified by that name, that therefore the Devil is called the old Serpent by the *Hebrews*, and is thus described by St. *John* in the *Revelations* 12. 9. *The great Dragon, the old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, who seduceth all the Earth.* See likewise *Rev.* 20. 2. For this Reason the Devil is called by our Blessed Saviour, *a Murderer from the Beginning.* And the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* 2. 24. tells us, That *Death entered into the World by the Envy of the Devil.* See also 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. where the Serpent is said *to have deceived the Woman by his Subtilty.* But this Hypothesis is easily refuted; for neither can the Devil be called *the most subtle Beast of the Field*, but in a Figurative

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Figurative Senſe; neither will the Puniſhment inflicted upon the Serpent, ſuffer us to doubt, that a Serpent's Body at leaſt appear'd here. To remove theſe Difficulties ſome conjecture, that the Devil did not put on a real Serpent, but only formed the Exterior Appearance of one. But the above-mention'd Objections are as directly level'd againſt this Opinion as the former.

IV. For this reaſon ſeveral Perſons have believed, that the Devil uſed the Serpent's body as an Organ to act his Impoſture by, and that God, to ſhew his utter Averſion and Hatred of Sin, puniſh'd the very Organ by which this Seduction was effected. But if it were ſo, what occaſion was there to ſay, that the Serpent was the moſt ſubtle Beaſt of the Field. For the Devil might have abuſed the moſt ſtupid Creature in the World to this purpoſe with as much Succeſs; for he did not employ the Serpent's Craft, but his own, to deceive *Eve*.

V. But others obſerving theſe and the like Difficulties in all theſe Opinions, came at laſt to this Point, as to own, that all we could apparently gather from this *Ænigma*, was, that the Firſt Parents of Mankind began to Sin, from whence a Series of innumerable Evils were derived to them and their Poſterity. 'Tis indeed certain, that now and heretofore Mankind has been in a State of great Corruption, nor can the beginning of this Infection be carried lower than the Original of the World. But then after what manner Sin entered into the World, ſo that we might under-

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ſtand plainly, and without the leaſt Reaſons of doubting, all the Circumſtances of the firſt Sin, none but thoſe can ſignifie to us, who were preſent at the matter, if by any means they could be revived again.

VI. Laſtly, Others finding in this Hiſtory, frequent mention made of Diſcourſes, where none at all ſeem to have paſſed, imagine, that the *Serpent* did not ſpeak, but that *Eve* ſaw him eating the Forbidden Fruit, and was ſeduced, by his Example, to eat of it her ſelf. Eſpecially if we conſider that this prohibited Fruit, by its beauty, and perhaps by the ſpecious name of *Knowledge*, might help to induce her, as ſhe was gazing on it. Indeed the Serpent's Puniſhment, below v. 14. *Thou ſhalt lick the Duſt all the days of thy Life*, ſeems to intimate, that the Serpent had deceived *Eve* by eating of the Fruit, and becauſe he had occaſioned her Ruine by eating of Fruit from a high Tree, therefore he was condemn'd to lick the Juices of the Earth. The Favourers of this Opinion do not deny, but that ſome Evil Spirit might act his part in this Tragedy, for which reaſon the *Jews* not rightly comprehending the meaning of this place, might in after-Ages call him by the name of the *Serpent*. But as the Sacred Hiſtorian introduces the Serpent Speaking, who had no Speech at all, according to the Genius of his Narration, as is plain from the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*, where he frequently repreſents God Almighty ſpeaking to all the parts of the Creation; ſo likewiſe becauſe he was to give him

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him his share in a Dialogue, by whose Example our first Parents were deceived, he therefore attributes Subtlety to him, which however can be supposed to belong to a Beast, no more than the Faculty of Speaking does. For this reason he is said to have used both Speech and Craftiness, because, as the Maintainers of this Opinion alledge, he as effectually ruined our first Parents, as if he had seduced them by a crafty artificial Harangue. And therefore both the Subtlety of the Serpent, and his Conversation with *Eve*, are considered by them, not as Circumstances that can be urged, but as some Oriental Ornaments of the History. This was in part the Opinion of *Isaac Abarbinel*, who denies that the Serpent could maintain any Discourses with *Eve*, and asserts, That nothing more is meant by this Colloquy, but *the Reasonings of the Woman from what she gathered from the Serpents action, and his eating of that Tree.* He pretends, that she inferr'd from the Serpent's Example, that the Forbidden Fruit was Wholesome and Nutritive, which Opinion does not well agree with the words, *You shall be like Gods*; the meaning of which could never be deduced from this single action of the Serpent.

In so perplex'd and obscure a Matter as this is, 'tis the safest way, as I imagine, openly to confess our Ignorance, provided we still preserve the Substance of the History, as 'tis explain'd in the fifth Opinion, but so as not to condemn those that differ from our Sentiments. We are now

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at liberty to examine more at large the moſt remarkable Particulars of this Relation.

VII. We find in the Sacred Writer, that the Serpent was the moſt Subtle of the Beaſts of the Field. Now ſome are apt to believe, that *Moſes* in this Paſſage had a Reſpect to the Craft of the Devil, who either appeared himſelf, or actually entered into the Body of the Serpent. But what wonder is it, that the Devil ſhould be more cunning than a Beaſt? And Secondly, How comes he to be reckoned among the Beaſts of the Field? Therefore others conjecture, That the Craftineſs of Serpents properly ſo called is here meant, and to this purpoſe obſerve, That as they lie hid in the Duſt, or under the Herbs, they uſe to bite the heels of the Animals that paſs by: For which reaſon *Ariſtotle Hiſt. Animal.* l. 1. c. 1. ranks them among the inſidious and wily Creatures, and therefore *Moſes* going about to relate the Fall of our firſt Parents, which was occaſioned by the Serpent, after what manner ſoever it happened, very pertinently obſerves, that the Serpent is an inſidious Animal, and indeed we find the Hebrew word, 1 *Sam.* 23. 22. applied to Men lying in wait, and ſtarting out of Holes. Otherwiſe, as for what regards Subtlety conſidered in general, there are ſeveral other Animals more cunning than a Serpent, among which *Ariſtotle* reckons Foxes, τὰ δὲ πανοῦργα ἢ κακοῦργα, οἷς ἀλώπηξ. Others are cunning and miſchievous as Foxes.

Thoſe that hold this Narration to be wholly Figurative, pretend that *Moſes* prudently makes mention

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mention of the insidious nature of the Serpent, to prepare his Reader for what he was going to tell him, of the Fall of our first Parents. Thus the most ancient Philosophers, both *Asiaticks* and *Græcians*, who used to deal in Apologues borrow'd from Brutes, if they are to speak concerning Craft, were wont to introduce a *Fox*, and to mention him in the beginning, as the *most Cunning of Beasts*, or else gave some by-hints of his Subtlety. Thus we find in *Phædrus*, that,

Dolosa vulpes avidis rapuit dentibus.

The Crafty *Fox with greedy Teeth devour'd.*

The same Creature is described by *Avienus*, as capable of acute Discourse, and is called by him *Arguta*, in his Fable of the *Fox and the Leopard*. But as no one of tolerable Sense, will infer from this, that the Fox is fitter to hold those Politick Discourses than any other Creature, so they say we lie under no Obligation to ascribe that Opinion to *Moses*, which *Josephus* erroneously attributes to him, *viz.* of assigning both Voice and Reason to Brutes.

VIII. Immediately upon eating the Forbidden Fruit, the Sacred Historian tells us, That our first Parents *knew themselves to be naked*, that is, They were sensible they had transgressed. Thus in *Exodus* 32.25. after the Golden Calf was consecrated, *Moses* is said to have seen *the People naked*; and in the New Testament, Γυμνὸς is sometimes taken for a Sinner, see *Rev.* 16. 15.

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Thoſe that interpret *naked* in its proper Senſe, involve themſelves in inſuperable Difficulties. When *Adam* and *Eve* were alone, they could no more be aſhamed of their Nakedneſs, or diſcover it if they knew nothing of it before, than when they were in the State of Innocence. But ſay others, The Fruit of this Forbidden Tree, provoked them to Luſt, and ſome undecent Motions of Body, which ſuppoſe to be true, (although 'tis a Conjecture without any manner of Foundation,) what will they be able to gather from hence? Can a Man's Appetite towards his Wife be ſaid to be Vicious, which Nature it ſelf has implanted upon all Creatures, or could they be more aſhamed, becauſe being naked, they felt this Appetite after their Tranſgreſſion, more than they did before? When only they two inhabited the Univerſe, their Bed under the bare Canopy of the Heavens was equally as Chaſte, as if it had been covered with a Roof, and Wall, and Cieling, and Tapeſtry. 'Tis certain they could never be aſhamed of that thing for which they were created, no leſs than other Animals; neither are we at this day aſhamed of it, but before Witneſſes, for certain Inconveniencies, which would ariſe from thence, though it is not ſo convenient to mention them in this place. I know what ſeveral of the Ancients, as well as Moderns, have ſaid upon this occaſion, but they are ſuch groundleſs precarious things, that I will not ſtay to confute them.

IX. We

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IX. We are now arrived to the laſt part of our Diſquiſition, *viz.* The Puniſhment inflicted upon the Serpent, which we ſhall examine in as ſmall a compaſs as may be. Thoſe that affirm the Devil tempted *Eve* out of the Serpent's Mouth, do not at all wonder that God Almighty here is ſaid to ſpeak to the Serpent, that is, to the Devil. But others that deny the Serpent to have ever talked to *Eve*, are of opinion, that God's words here directed to the Serpent, were not for its own ſake, which as being deſtitute of reaſon it could not underſtand, but for the Comfort of *Adam* and *Eve*. However both are agreed in this, That God might puniſh the Inſtrument, by which Mankind was ſeduced, to expreſs his juſt Hatred of Sin; as we find a like inſtance in *Exodus* 21.28. where an Oxe that had goared a Man or a Woman, ſo that they died, was commanded *to be ſtoned, and his Fleſh not to be eaten.* One part of the Malediction is, That he ſhould crawl upon his Belly, concerning which, there are two different Opinions. Some, in which number we find *Joſephus* and ſeveral of the Modern *Jews*, believe, that God deprived the Serpent of his Feet, and commanded him to creep upon the Duſt; and indeed if *Moſes* had this in his Thoughts, he could not have expreſs'd himſelf more plainly concerning it. But others believe it very improbable, that God ſhould make any Alteration in the Nature of a Serpent, merely for the Tranſgreſſion of Man, and therefore pretend, that what was natural to him, turned to

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his Puniſhment, as Nakedneſs in a Man, and the Pains of Child-birth in a Woman. Indeed if Serpents had Feet at any time, they muſt of neceſſity have more than four, by reaſon of the prodigious length of their Body. But ſtill 'tis difficult to comprehend, how a thing which was merely natural, and accompanied with no Pain, ſhould be turned into a Puniſhment. As 'tis no Puniſhment for four-footed Creatures that they cannot fly, no more is it to thoſe Reptiles that are deſtitute of Feet, to crawl upon their Bellies. Let the Reader examine which ſide has the feweſt Difficulties, and chuſe either this or that Opinion as he ſees fit.

Diſſertation V.

Concerning the Flood.

I. *The different Opinions about the Flood.* II. *Some hold it to be Univerſal, and endeavour to prove it from the expreſs words of* Moſes. III. *Others make it particular: The Arguments alledged by them.* IV. *Their Anſwers to the Reaſons commonly urged by the Maintainers of the firſt Opinion.*

I. ALL Interpreters are agreed, That the Deluge was ſo far Univerſal, as it overwhelm'd all the then inhabited part of the World;

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World; and that all the Race of Mankind, except *Noah*'s Family, were deſtroy'd by it. But ſome are of opinion, that the whole Globe of the Earth was cover'd with Water, which others again as poſitively deny.

II. They that hold the Affirmative, in the firſt place, ground themſelves upon the expreſs words of *Moſes*, who introduces God laying his Commands upon *Noah*, Chap. 6. 19. *of every living thing of all fleſh*, to take two of every ſort into the *Ark*, to preſerve the ſeveral Species of them, leſt they ſhould be loſt. Which Command *Noah* accordingly obey'd, and taking Pairs of every Bird, every Beaſt, and every creeping thing upon the Earth, according to their ſeveral Kinds, placed them in the Ark. Now theſe Expreſſions denote, that all living Creatures whatever were to be deſtroy'd, for otherwiſe *Noah* might have recruited himſelf much eaſier out of ſome other Country where the Deluge did not reach, and conſequently where they were not deſtroy'd, than have kept them in the Ark, which was infinitely more troubleſome. As for the Birds eſpecially, there was no neceſſity to gather them, becauſe as they could have eaſily flown to the dry places, ſo after the Country that was overflow'd was dry again, they would have ſoon returned. Nay, it had been much more commodious for *Noah* to have gone to that part of the World which was not cover'd with Waters, than to be ſhut up ſo long in the Ark.

Secondly,

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Secondly, As the Species of all Animals are ſaid to be preſerved by *Noah*'s Care, ſo *Moſes* could not in more expreſs words have told us, that all the reſt over the face of the World were deſtroy'd, than in the following Lines, Chap. 7. 21. *All the fleſh died that moved upon the Earth, both of Fowl and of Cattle, and of Beaſt, and of every creeping thing*, &c. *All in whoſe noſtrils was the Breath of Life, of all that was on the dry Land died. And every living Subſtance was deſtroyed, which was upon the face of the ground, both Man and Cattle, and the creeping things, and the Fowl of the Heaven.* If a Man was never ſo much minded to tell his Reader, that all ſorts of Creatures in all places were deſtroy'd, 'tis impoſſible to do it more plainly. How can the Birds of any one Country be ſuppoſed to be loſt, if they had the next Country to fly to, which was free from the Flood. Could not ſo much as one wild Beaſt ſave himſelf thither by flight?

Thirdly, We are told in the eighth Chapter, that *Noah* ſtaid within the Ark till ſuch time as the Earth was dried, when it had been much more eaſie for him to have gone to ſome of thoſe Countries which had not been viſited by the Deluge; eſpecially, ſince the Soil of ſuch a place would have been much better for him upon all accounts, than that of a Country corrupted by the Salt Water. Nay, he might, as we obſerv'd before, have fled thither before the Flood, with his Family and all his Effects, and ſo have avoided the Fatigue and Trouble of building

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an Ark, which employ'd him without queſtion a whole year.

Fourthly, The heighth of the Water ſhews, that the whole Terreſtrial Globe was covered; for ſince *the higheſt Mountains under Heaven* were covered fifteen Cubits, that is, two and twenty Foot high with Water, 'tis certain that no part of the Earth could eſcape the Flood; and ſo we find, that when the Waters began to decreaſe, the firſt place the Ark lighted upon, was on the higheſt ridge of the *Gordiæan* Mountains.

To theſe Reaſons, which are borrowed from *Moſes's* Narration, we will not add the general Conſent of ancient and modern Interpreters, becauſe all of them purely depend upon it. Now thoſe that are of Opinion that it was no otherwiſe Univerſal, than as it overflow'd ſo much of the World as was inhabited by Mankind, and deſtroy'd all Men but thoſe that eſcaped in the Ark, think they have defended their Hypotheſis with invincible Arguments, and in the next place have produced Anſwers to all the abovementioned Reaſons, which, to ſay the Truth, do not equal the Force of Arguments. After the ſame manner, thoſe that maintain that all the World was covered with the Flood, prove their Opinion out of Scripture, much better than they reſolve the Objections of their Adverſaries.

III. That only the inhabited part of the World ſuffer'd by the Flood, they think is manifeſt from hence, That ſince God Almighty only propoſed to deſtroy Mankind, there was no neceſſity for the

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the Flood to reach farther than Men had planted themſelves. It is likewiſe paſt Diſpute, that he deſign'd to puniſh Men alone, becauſe Men alone are capable of Sin, in whoſe Deſtruction, if any Beaſts are involved, they periſhed for no other reaſon, but becauſe they happened to be in the ſame place where Men lived. Now before the Flood Mankind could not extend it ſelf far, and perhaps had not exceeded thoſe Countries which lie about the *Tigris* and *Euphrates*. 'Tis a fooliſh thing, ſays *Iſaac Voſſius*, in his Diſſertation *de Ætat. Mund.* p. 283. to imagine, that Mankind was ſo much multiplied before the Flood, as to inhabit all the corners of the Earth. How ſlow Humane Nature was in producing Men at that time, we may eaſily gather from this, That *Noah* was but the ninth from *Adam*. Whoever computes the Matter fairly will ſee, that from thoſe eight Perſons who eſcaped the Flood, till the time of the Diſperſion of the Nations, more Men might be born, than from *Adam* alone in the ſpace of two thouſand years. Nevertheleſs 'tis certain, that before the Confuſion of *Babel*, Mankind poſſeſſed but a ſmall part of *Aſia*. Therefore thoſe Perſons are very much miſtaken, who ſuppoſe, that in *Noah's* time the whole World was inhabited, when perhaps only *Syria* and *Meſopotamia* were planted. Now no reaſon obliges us to extend the Inundation beyond the Bounds of the inhabited World: Nay, on the other hand 'tis abſurd to ſay, That the Effects of the Puniſhment which was inflicted upon Mankind,

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kind, ſhould be exerted where no Men were to be found.

Secondly, If we conſider how prodigious the heighth of the Waters muſt be, to cover all the higheſt Mountains in the World, there is not Water enough either in the Sea, or Clouds, to riſe ſo high: If there are no Mountains whoſe tops are above three Miles high, for which conſult *Iſaac Voſſius* in *Pomp. Melam.* l. 5. c. 2. and *Varenius's Geogr. Gen.* l. 1. c. 10. yet the Water muſt have riſen ſo high. But 'tis evident, that neither the Sea-water, nor that in Fountains and Rivers, nor Showers, were ſufficient to effect it. The Water which is contain'd within the Earth, could never be carried ſo high, unleſs the Earth ſunk in, and the Mountains were levell'd; which contradicts the *Moſaical* Hiſtory, and though the Water of the Clouds were joyn'd to it, yet 'tis impoſſible it ſhould aſcend ſo high, ſince we ſee 'tis made up of Vapors exhaled from the Waters below; for the collected Water of the Clouds, muſt have made a much greater Maſs, than the Globe of the Earth, if it could ſo far overflow it, as to exceed the higheſt Mountains twenty Foot at leaſt, which may be proved, by conſidering the greatneſs of the watry Circles which muſt encompaſs the Earth; and the farther they are removed from the Center of it, muſt needs be ſo much the greater. Some Perſons, to clear themſelves from theſe Difficulties, in the firſt place pretend, that the Air was condens'd in its loweſt parts, and in the Caverns of the Earth,

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or at leaſt ſomething elſe ſerved inſtead of Water: And laſtly, That even the Air condenſed into Water, fell down with the Rain. But all theſe are mere Conjectures, of which *Moſes* mentions not the leaſt Syllable; beſides they muſt needs confeſs, that they add Miracle to Miracle, merely to overflow thoſe Countries where there is no reaſon why a Deluge ſhould be ſent. If we ſhould ſuppoſe the whole circumambient Air, ſaith the above-mentioned *Voſſius, in Epiſt. ad And. Col.* p. 385. to be turned into Water, yet we ſhall never make the Maſs of Waters riſe one and thirty Foot and a half higher than the Superficies of the Earth. My reaſon is, Becauſe Water will never be made to riſe higher, either by Pumps, or any other attractive Power: For the Air that preſſes without, and forces the Water into the Tub or Pump, makes an exact *æquilibrium* with the Water which is included in the Tub. Therefore according to the weight of the Water incloſed in the Tub, is the weight of that Cylinder of Air which preſſes the Water without; ſo that if the whole body of Air were condenſed, and turned into Water, yet the Superficies of the Waters would not be above thirty two Foot high. To this we may add, That to turn this Air into Water, it muſt be ſo much condenſed, that a certain quantity of it muſt equal the like quantity of Water in weight. But to effect this, the Air muſt be at leaſt eight hundred times thicker than it is; for it appears by undoubted Experiments,

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ments, that the exact weight of this lower Air which we breath, and which without queſtion is the heavieſt, is eight hundred times heavier at leaſt than that of Water. See *Edm. Halley*'s ſecond Diſſertation in the Tranſactions of the Royal Society. T. XVI. p. 104.

Others that cannot digeſt this Condenſation of the Air, are of opinion that the Rain and Sea-water was rarefied. However if we ſhould admit ſo great a Rarefaction of Water, they are *Voſſius*'s own words, yet to make the quantity of it no more than fifteen times greater than uſual, which is the leaſt we can ſuppoſe, it ought properly to be called a Miſt and not Water, wherein as neither Men nor the other Terreſtrial Creatures could have been deſtroyed, ſo the Fiſhes could not have lived in it. Beſides, had *Noah*'s Ark been made of the lighteſt Cork imaginable, yet ſo light and thin a body could never have ſupported it.

If any one ſhould ſtill inſiſt, that the Waters were created out of nothing, and annihilated again after all Living Creatures were deſtroyed, it may be ſaid in the firſt place, That there is nothing to countenance this Conjecture to be found in *Moſes*, who on the other hand expreſly tells us, That the Waters of the Abyſs and the Heavens were ſent upon the Earth: And in the next place it ought to be conſider'd, Whether 'tis ſuitable for the Divine Wiſdom to create a mighty Maſs of Waters, to overflow thoſe places where there were nothing but Beaſts, and afterwards

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wards to annihilate them. Laſtly, It appears from the eighth Chapter, That the Waters were diminiſh'd by the Wind, and not by any extraordinary Effect of the Divine Omnipotence.

From hence a third Argument is deduced, whereby they endeavour to prove, that the Deluge was only particular. God, ſays *Moſes*, Ch. 8. 1. ſent a Wind, and the Waters abated. The only thing the Wind could do was, That a few more Vapours ſhould be exhaled, or that the Water ſhould more ſwiftly be carried into ſome certain place, into which of its own accord it would not run ſoon enough; but it could never exhauſt the Ocean. Who can therefore believe, that the whole Earth, cover'd with Waters to ſo prodigious a heighth, could be dried up by the Wind? 'Tis certain this could no more be effected by the Wind, than in the Beginning of all things, the Sea could be compell'd into its *Alveus* by it; eſpecially if we conſider, that the Sun perpetually draws up Vapours from the Earth, even without the Wind; which Vapours being in too great Plenty in the Air, fall down back again upon the Earth in Showers. Beſides, if the Wind could draw up ſo vaſt a quantity of Water in Vapours, it would follow, That there would be always much more Water in the Clouds than in the Ocean, ſince if they were all pour'd down, they could cover the whole Earth, not the higheſt Mountains excepted. But we have already ſhown that this cannot be done.

Fourthly,

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Fourthly, If the Sea-waters were ſpread all over the Face of the Earth, the Trees and ſmaller Plants could ſcarce have been preſerv'd from Deſtruction; and if all Trees in all Countries had been ſpoil'd by the Saltneſs of the Water, how came they to be propagated again, ſince God is no where ſaid to have created them a-new. Now no one will be ſo Obſtinate as to deny, that in the compaſs of a year, or ſomewhat leſs, both Plants and Seeds will be corrupted in Salt-water: And thoſe that are skill'd in Natural Philoſophy will ſcarce affirm, that they would grow again, out of putrified Mud fermented by the Sun, as was formerly believed. 'Tis true, the force of this Argument is ſomewhat abated, if the Patrons of the Univerſal Deluge anſwer as they uſe to do, that the Saltneſs of the Sea was very much taken off by ſo great a quantity of freſh Water mingled with it. However 'tis hard to imagine, how ſeveral Plants could continue ſo long a ſpace even under freſh Water, without being kill'd.

Fifthly, If all the Animals of all Countries in the World came to *Noah* in general, as 'tis plain they muſt needs come, ſuppoſe both Hemiſpheres were covered with Water, It may be enquired into, how ſo many Animals, which are peculiar to *America*, could come from that Continent to *Meſopotamia*? If *America* is any where joyn'd to our part of the World, it muſt be far Northwards under a cold Climate, which Beaſts, that are proper to the Torrid *Zone*, cannot endure.

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Nay, if we ſuppoſe it to be joyn'd to our Climate under a more favourable Latitude, how could the *American* Beaſts, but the Serpents more eſpecially, poſſibly get over ſo many Rivers, and Lakes, and Mountains, and find their way through ſo many Woods in ſo long a Journey? By what means, ſays *Iſaac Voſſius*, p. 398. could that Animal, for inſtance, which from the ſlowneſs of its Motion, is called the *Lazy*, arrive to *Noah*'s Ark, and travel ſo many Miles, which after its own natural Pace, it could not perform in the ſpace of Twenty thouſand years.

Let the Patrons of an Univerſal Deluge likewiſe inform us, after what manner (*Id.* p. 186.) theſe Animals, leaving *Noah*'s Ark and the ancient World, found their way into *America*, and Lands that are disjoyned by a vaſt Ocean. Another Abſurdity too would follow, which is this, that ſuch innumerable ſorts of Creatures, which were unknown to our World both formerly and now, ſhould paſs through ſuch mighty Tracts of Ground, and not leave any remainders of their ſeveral Kinds in their former Habitations.

Sixthly, The very building of the Ark preſents us with no leſs Difficulties; if it were true, what the generality of Mankind believes, *viz.* That it was a common Receptacle of all Beaſts, and that we cannot name one Animal, whoſe Poſterity did not come out of this Manſion. If we only compute thoſe Creatures which are frequently found in the old World, yet the room which the Scriptures allow for this Ark, could not

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not contain ſo many different Species, and the Food that was neceſſary to maintain them ſo long. But if we take in the Beaſts of the New World, and the Southern Hemiſphere, there will not be room enough for the Animals themſelves, much leſs for the vaſt Proviſions to keep them alive there. Beſides, a Man cannot eaſily comprehend, how theſe Animals, after what manner ſoever they were diſtributed into their Cells, and their ſeveral Apartments kept clean, could live ſo long in this cloſe Confinement. The Queſtion too may be put, whether they generated in the Ark, which, if any one denies, 'tis very ſtrange, that theſe Brutes, which if you except a few of them, are hot for Copulation once a year at leaſt, ſhould abſtain from it; and if 'tis affirm'd then, as their Off-ſpring increaſed, there muſt be of courſe a greater Conſumption of their Proviſions. Several Perſons here have recourſe to Miracles, which as they might happen, ſo we need not ſuppoſe them without urgent neceſſity. But what neceſſity is there, that Countries deſtitute of Men, and the Animals of thoſe Countries, ſhould be overflown?

Seventhly. To leſſen this Difficulty, perhaps it may be objected, That no more Creatures were created in every Species than in that of Man. But the above-mention'd Learned Man thus confutes them. God, ſays he, from the Creation, fill'd the whole World, according to the reſpective Faculty of every Country and Sea, with all ſorts of Beaſts, Fiſhes and Trees. But Man

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alone is said to be created by himself. Now it would be monstrously absurd to imagine, That only two Animals of every Species, and that only in one place, were formed by God Almighty. For if we are of that Opinion, what will become of those Plants and Animals which only breed in peculiar Continents, and which, for the above-mention'd reason, could not be transferr'd, and propagated from our World to theirs?

IV. These are the Arguments which have been urged to prove, That only the inhabited part of the Earth, and its Animals, suffer'd in the Deluge. But because the Maintainers of the contrary Opinion object, That when God speaks, all Humane Reasoning ought to cease: True it is, say the Patrons of a Particular Flood, and so it ought, if the Divine Words would only admit of an Interpretation. And thus the most Reverend Bishop of *Worcester*, Dr. *Stillingfleet*, in the third Book and fourth Chapter of his *Origines Sacræ*, where he treats of this Subject with that Learning and Judgment which is so peculiar to him, owns, that it cannot be proved by any necessary Arguments drawn from the Scriptures, that the whole Superficies of the Earth was overflow'd. We are at leisure now to examine the Answers they bring to the above-cited Reasons.

First, Though *All* Creatures are said to be admitted into the Ark, yet they observe that the word *All* is of doubtful Signification, and is very seldom taken absolutely, but in most places is restrained to the Subject then in hand. Even in the

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the Writings of *Moſes* himſelf, where he tells us, That a Famine prevail'd *in All the Earth*; our Divines own, that 'tis to be underſtood only of a particular part of the World. Thus *Voſſius*, nay, other Writers, when they ſpeak of a conſiderable number of Animals, expreſs themſelves after the ſame manner. *Livy*, ſpeaking of the *Circenſian* Spectacles as they were exhibited in his Age, has the following words, Lib. 44. c. 9. It was the Faſhion then, even before our Modern Vanity was introduced, of filling the *Circus* with the Beaſts of *ALL NATIONS*, to divert the People with ſeveral ſorts of Spectacles. Here a few Nations, that were either Neighbours, or Subjects of the *Roman* People, are called *Omnes Gentes*. In like manner ſeveral Birds and Beaſts in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Ch. 31. 6. where the King of *Egypt* is deſcribed under the Repreſentation of a Tree, are called *All*. In the Leaves of it *All* the Birds of the Air built their Neſts, under its Boughs *All* the Beaſts of the Field did Copulate, and under its Shade did dwell *All* Nations. See *Daniel* 4. 18. ſo likewiſe *Hoſea* 4. 3. where the great Devaſtation of *Judæa* is deſcribed: Therefore, ſays the Prophet, the Earth ſhall Mourn, and *All* dwelling therein, among the Beaſts of the Field, and the Birds of the Air, they ſhall fall Sick, yea, the Fiſhes of the Sea ſhall be deſtroy'd. Therefore *All* Animals, Clean and Unclean, that were let into the Ark, are to be underſtood only of thoſe which that Country produc'd, where the firſt Seat of Mankind was, *viz.* That Fruitful

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Territory about the *Tigris* and *Euphrates*: And perhaps the *All* here does not comprehend those of *All* Kinds, but only *All* those which are useful to Man. Of which Nature are the Cattel they feed upon, as Oxen, Sheep, &c. Horses, Asses, Camels, which were there imploy'd in carrying of Burdens, but therefore call'd *Unclean*, because they were not used for Food. Of Birds there might be Cocks, Geese, Ducks, Pigeons, Ravens, &c. Nor is it strange that *Noah* was commanded to preserve these Animals, which could not be had out of the neighbouring Countries, nor tamed without a long and tedious Trouble.

As for what relates to *Noah*, the Reasons why he was not ordered to fly to the adjoyning Country where the Deluge did not reach, were, because other People should not follow him thither. Besides, it was convenient, that the Ark wherein he was to be preserved from the Deluge, should be built before those very Persons to whom he foretold it, that so they might be convinc'd he spoke to them in earnest. God Almighty, as *Vossius* conjectures, thought that his Justice was not to be exerted but in a convenient place. Now what more convenient place can be imagin'd than this, where the Guilty were to be punish'd in *Noah*'s sight, and he that was Innocent, should be saved in the midst of Sinners?

Secondly, Where it is said, That *all living Creatures* were destroy'd, the place must be understood only of those Animals that were within the Limits of the overflow'd Countries: Which

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is not only the answer of *Vossius*, but of Dr. *Stillingfleet*. Nay, from what has already been said, concerning the word *All*, we may gather, That 'tis not inconsistent with the *Mosaical* Narration, to suppose, that not all, but many Animals, and especially such as were in a more particular manner serviceable to Mankind, were destroy'd.

Thirdly, *Noah* tarried in the Ark till the Waters were dried up, because it would be more convenient for him to set footing in a Country which he was formerly acquainted with, and which was free from Wild Beasts, than in an unknown place, full of Savage Creatures. No doubt on't, but the Soil was sufficiently damag'd by the Stagnation of the Water; but *Mesopotamia*, and the adjoyning Countries, being watered by vast noble Rivers, received less Detriment from the Salt Water, than others that were destitute of fresh Streams; so that 'tis reasonable to believe, they recover'd their former Fertility in a short space.

Fourthly, The highest Mountains that were covered to so vast a heighth by the Flood, were those which were scituate in these Countries, beyond which Mankind was not at that time propagated. Nor does that Addition, *Under Heavens*, oblige us to believe the contrary, since it is sometimes used of a few neighbouring Countries, as *Deut.* 2. 25. On that day will I begin to send the Fear and Terror of thee, through the People under all the Heavens, *Sub omni Cælo.*

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Having thus consider'd what might be said in behalf of this Opinion against the former, it now remains to be enquir'd how far, according to this Hypothesis, the Deluge might extend. But since we do not know what Countries were then inhabited, What Man dares presume to define the Bounds of the Flood? Perhaps that Tract of Ground which lies between the four Seas, the *Persian*, the *Caspian*, the *Euxine*, and the *Syrian*; in which compass we find the *Tigris*, the *Euphrates*, and several other vast Rivers, were by the Eruption of all Waters, and by the Clouds, gathered from all parts of the World by the Divine Power, and there condens'd into Moisture, buried and overflow'd. 'Tis true, this could not be effected without a Miracle; but then there is no way to solve the Difficulties of so great a *Cataclysm* without a Miracle. However the less and fewer of this Kind we suppose, provided the rest may be conveniently explain'd, that Exposition uses to be accounted the most agreeable to Truth by all Interpreters, because God is never so prodigal of Miracles, as to have recourse to them where Natural Causes are sufficient; much less does he violate and overturn all the establish'd Laws of Nature without good reason. In this very History we find, that God was pleased to give *Noah* notice when it was time for him to go into the Ark, because he could scarce know it of himself, but he does not tell him the time when he was to go out of it, but left the Matter wholly to his own Discretion, because

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becauſe he might very well know it without the Divine Aſſiſtance. He might, if it had ſo pleaſed him, have preſerved all the Animals in the Ark alive without any Aliment, which had made the Ark conſiderably lighter, and had ſaved *Noah* a great deal of trouble; and yet we ſee he did not do it, becauſe theſe Creatures might be ſupplied with Food by Humane Diligence. Where the Induſtry of Man ceaſes, there the Divine Help begins; and *Vice versâ*.

Thus the Favourers of a Particular Deluge ſupport their Opinion, but it has been objected againſt them, That if this Suppoſition were true, the Superficies of the Water could not have been perfectly Spherical, and conſequently that the Ark in this great Declivity, muſt neceſſarily incline to the lower places. But as *Voſſius* has very well anſwered, that which happens in leſſer Inundations, the ſame might fall out in this great, and more than Natural Deluge. For the ſame Power which drove the Seas and Clouds to that Tract of Earth which was to be deſtroy'd, did likewiſe ſuſtain the Ark, and the Declivity of the Water, as long as there was occaſion for it.

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Dissertation VI.

Concerning the Confusion of Languages.

I. *What is meant by* The whole Earth was of one Lip. II. *And* Let us make our selves a Name. III. *Who are denoted by the* Children of Men. IV. *This passage,* Let us go down, *examined.* V. *The different Opinions how the Confusion was effected.* VI. *That the Design of* Babel *might be Foolish, but was not Impious: Some Conjectures why God thought fit to blast it.*

I. BEFORE this wonderful Confusion happened at *Babel*, the Sacred Historian expressly tells us, *Gen.* 11. 1. That *the whole Earth was of one Lip, and of the same words*; or as we have translated it, *of one Language, and of one Speech*; because 'tis evident that the word *Lip*, both here and in several other places, signifies *Speech*; and the reason of it is, Because the Lips are no less serviceable to us in speaking, than the Tongue it self, see *Isaiah* 19. 18. No one doubts, but that one Universal Language was spoken by all Mankind at this time; but whether *Moses* has here a regard to that Ὁμοφωνία, is not so plain. Perhaps these words may signifie, that Men lived in

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in a State of Peace and Concord, because 'tis equally necessary towards the Building of any City, that Men should agree in their Sentiments and Inclinations, as well as in their Language: Nor does the Idiom of the Hebrew Language reject this Interpretation. Thus for instance to denote the unanimous Agreement of the *Canaanites* to beat back the *Israelites* by main force, *They gathered themselves together* (says the Sacred History *Joshua* 9. 2.) *to fight with* Joshua, *and with* Israel *with one mouth.* Thus likewise the False Prophets agreeing together in their Predictions, *declared good unto the King with one mouth,* 1 Kings 22. 13. Hence it is, that *to speak with the Lip of another*, is the same thing as to agree, as appears by the above-cited place of *Isaiah*, *In that day shall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *speak the lip of* Canaan, *and Swear to the Lord of Hosts*; that is to say, They shall be of the same Opinion with the *Hebrews* that inhabit the Land of *Canaan.* And indeed the words *Unum Labium, & una Verba*, seem rather to signifie Agreement *of Mind than of Language*, although 'tis certain there was but one Language then in the World. For by *eadem* or *una verba* we are not here to understand the same Sounds, and the same Syllables, but *voces consentientes* Unity of Mind. *Solomon Jarchi* expounds it *the same* design.

II. Learned Men have rightly enough observed, that in Scripture *to make ones self a Name*, is all one as to *get ones self a Fame* or *Reputation*,

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tion, in which sence this Expression is to be found, 2 *Sam.* 8.13. *Isaiah* 63.12. *Jer.* 32.20. & *Dan.* 9.15. and so this Tower might be said to be built *in nomen, i. e.* to spread the Fame of the Builders all over the World, which Phrase is to be met with 1 *Chron.* 22.5. where mention is made of the Building of the Temple of *Jerusalem*. But this cannot possibly be the meaning of this place, for what an odd sort of a Conclusion would this be, Let us acquire our selves a Reputation, lest we be dispersed all over the Earth? Besides with whom would all Mankind which was concerned in the Building of this City, have gotten Glory and Fame? With their Posterity, as some will be apt to say, but then what fine Sence would this make, Let us make our selves Famous with Posterity, lest we be scattered into several Countries? If we carefully examine these words, and revolve the whole History in our Mind, we shall find the meaning of the place to be to this or the like purpose. Let us build us a City that may be the Metropolis of all the World, in which let there be one Government, the Seat of which Empire shall be perpetually in that City, lest Mankind be scattered all over the World, according to the Fancy of every rambling Family. If this Interpretation be admitted, it will follow, that *to make us a Name*, at least in this place, signifies in a manner the same as *to leave our name somewhere*, i. e. to make a place Famous with our Habitation, so that it derives its name from the Inhabitant, see

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1 *Kings* 9. 3. & 14. 21. Perhaps a *Name* here denotes a Monument, which is called by the Name of the Person that erected it. Thus *Absalom* in his Life time had reared up for himself a Pillar, which is in the King's Dale, for he said, I have no Son to keep my Name in remembrance, and he called the Pillar after his own Name, and it is called unto this day *Absalom's* place, 2 *Sam.* 18. 18. So *Cain* not long after the Creation of the World built a City, which he called after the Name of his Son, *Gen.* 4. 17. In like manner Men were now resolved to build a City, which perhaps they would have called Ἀνθρωποπόλις, or by some such sort of a Name. But it instead of the Hebrew word שם *Schem*, *a Name*, we changed one Letter and read it עם *em*, that is to say, a Metropolis, the same Sence would arise; nor could it be pretended that this Expression is incongruous, *Let us build us a City and Tower, and make us a Metropolis, lest we be dispersed through all the Earth.* And therefore the Intention of Mankind perhaps, might be to build a Mother-City or Metropolis, in the Vale of *Shinaar*, to which the Cities around it should be subject. Thus upon the building of this Metropolis, there would have been but one Empire in the World, which perhaps was design'd at first with no ill Intention, but because this Project drew several great Inconveniences along with it, as we shall hereafter observe, God was pleased to blast and disappoint it.

III. *By*

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III. *By the Children of Men*, Bochart. Phal. l. 1. c. 10. with several others, would understand the Unfaithful only, because the Daughters of Men, *Gen.* 6. 2. signifies the Female Descendants of *Cain*, distinguished from those of *Seth*, and thinks it by no means probable, that *Noah*, *Shem*, *Arphaxad*, *Salah* and *Heber* were concern'd in the building of so vain and daring a Structure. But in the first place 'tis evident enough, that all Mankind, consisting of the Faithful as well as the Unfaithful, are generally meant by the Children of Men. *Secondly*, It is manifest that this Phrase is here to be taken in that Sence, from the first Verse of this Chapter, where they are called *the whole Earth*, as well as from the Silence of *Moses*. *Thirdly*, The Posterity of three Women, and that within the compass of an Age, were not sufficient to have laid the Foundation of an indifferent City, much less can we suppose that any of them refused to give their assistance towards so vast an Undertaking, which required so many hands. *Fourthly*, *Noah*, and the rest from whom the *Hebrews* are descended, are without reason exempted out of this number, since this Attempt had nothing of Impiety in it, although we own it was undiscreet, and not agreeable to the Will of God, as shall be demonstrated below; neither if there had been any harm in it, does it therefore follow, that Men obnoxious to Sin, although in other respects they were not bad, abstain from it. Besides who can imagine, that while *Noah* and

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and his Sons were alive, at so small a distance too from the Flood, Mankind was divided into *Faithful* and *Unfaithful*. We may indeed rationally enough suppose, that some of them were not so Pious as others, but however they do not therefore deserve to be stigmatized by the odious Character of *Unbelievers*.

IV. *Let us go down.* The Interpreters are divided about the meaning of this passage, as well as that of *Let us make Man* in the first Chapter of *Genesis*. Some both Jews and Christians are of opinion, that God is here introduced speaking πανθρωπικῶς after the manner of Kings, who as they act not only by their own Judgment, but that of their Privy-Counsellors, use the plural number when they speak to their People. Nay sometimes they speak after this fashion, when they consult their Nobles. Thus 1 *Kings* 12. 9. *What Counsel give you that we may answer this People?* says *Rehoboam* to his young Advisers. 2 *Chron.* 10. 9. *Esdras* 4. 18. Thus God himself also is described like a King consulting his Noble-men, 1 *Kings* 22. 20. *And the Lord said, Who shall perswade* Ahab *that he may go up, and fall at* Ramoth-Gilead? *And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.*

Others pretend there is no necessity to have recourse to this Custom of Kings, since sometimes we find in the Hebrew, as well as in the Greek and Latin Languages, particular Men speaking of themselves in the plural Number. Thus *Bildad* speaks

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speaks to *Job*, when only they two were together, *Quando tandem finem imponetis sermonibus? Intelligite & postea loquemur. Cur reputamur ut Jumentum, & sorduimus in oculis vestris?* Job 18. 2, 3. see likewise *Cant.* 1. 4. 2 *Sam.* 16. 20. and *Dan.* 2. 36.

Some of the later *Rabbins*, as well as the ancient *Jews* maintain, that God speaks to his Angels here as to his Guards. The *Chaldæan* Wise Men indeed never describe God doing any thing but without a great attendance of Angels, as *Jamblichus* often informs us, and particularly §. 5. c. 21. that all those Powers that are subject to them, go before the Presence of the Gods, and whenever they make a Procession to the Earth, bear them company. And the Jewish Masters, who, as some Learned Men imagine, borrow'd their Doctrine concerning Angels out of *Chaldæa*, were of the same Opinion. *Origen* in his Homily upon *Numbers* 11. is of this Opinion, and St. *Austin de Civ. Dei*, lib. 16. cap. 5.

Lastly, Some Christians believe that the Hypostasis of the Son and the Holy Ghost are here spoken to by the Hypostasis of the Father. 'Tis indeed certain that several Christians, even immediately after the times of the Apostles, imagined that in that famous passage of *Genesis*, *Let us make Man*, God the Father spoke to the Son. Thus *Barnabas* in the fourth Chapter of his Epistle, according to the *Paris* Edition, but in the fifth of that of *Oxford*, Our Lord, says he, vouchsafed to suffer for our Salvation, though he is Lord of the

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the Universe, to whom his Father said before the Creation of the World, *Let us make Man*. *Hug. Menard* upon this place of *Barnabas*, has proved that some of the later Fathers after him, as *Justin*, *Irenæus*, *Theophilus*, and several more, were of the same opinion. But after all, several Men of the greatest Reputation in the Learned World, think that neither of these two Passages are to be urged too positively against the Jews, as if they amounted to the force of a Demonstration.

V. The Hebrew Root *balal*, which we have Englished to *confound*, properly signifies *to mingle things of a different nature*; but what it means in this place, is not agreed among the Annotators. Some are of opinion that God utterly extirpated the Memory of the Primitive Language out of the Minds of Men, and sent a new one to each Clan or Family: Others maintain that this happen'd neither to *Heber* nor any of his Progeny, who still kept up the use of the Primitive Language, *viz.* the Hebrew: And lastly, others pretend that only the Memories of Men were disturbed, so that they fell upon new Dialects of the first Tongue, but invented no new ones wholly different from the first; and these support their Hypothesis by the Signification of the word *Balal*, which signifies to mingle and not to create. However, most of them are agreed that it happen'd in an instant, by a Divine Miracle. For my part, I see no reason why we should believe this Confusion was wrought

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in a moment: Though this History indeed is related in the compass of a few lines, and the event that followed upon God's Determination, is immediately subjoined, yet no rational Man will from thence conclude that it was all transacted on the sudden. Don't we find that *Moses* delivers the Original of Mankind in a short *Compendium*, and that the Occurrences of several Ages are related in a few lines. And therefore 'tis more credible that a Spirit of Discord was sent among Men, upon which they abandon'd this foolish Undertaking, and dispersing into the neighbouring Countries, and removing their Habitations from one place to another, as they happen'd to be straitned for want of room, till in process of time living at a great distance from one another, and maintaining little or no Correspondence, their Languages came to be changed: Now because these Passages are related by the sacred Historian in a compendious Narration, the Interpreters erroneously believed that they were done in as short a time, as the Verses in which they are set down, may be read.

As we have already shown, that those Persons may be said to speak one Tongue who live amicably and like Friends together; so the Jews say of those that are at variance, that their Tongues are not only confused, but divided. Thus *David* in the 55th Psalm v. 10. when his Enemies concerted together how to destroy him, *Lord*, says he, *divide their Tongues*; that

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s, make Discord and Dissention arise among them that they may no longer unanimously agree to act against me, and contrive my Destruction.

VI. As we have already observed, these Persons who attempted to build a Metropolis for all Mankind, may rather be charged with Imprudence or Folly, than any Impiety. Let us now see whether we may be able to conjecture for what reason God disliked and frustrated their Undertaking. 1. Two celebrated Rabbis, *Aben Ezra* and *Levi ben Gersom*, who deny that the Builders of *Babel* were guilty of any Sin, because they design'd nothing more by this Project than to perpetuate the Society of Mankind, and hinder them from dispersing, are of Opinion, that therefore God was pleased to frustrate their Attempt, least if they all lived within the limits of one Country, all Mankind might at once be destroy'd by an Earthquake, Conflagration, Hail, Deluge, or any Accidents of the like nature. 2. Since Empires are at first possess'd by those that are not the best of Men, but such as either by Fraud or Strength aspire to a Soveraignty above their Fellows, all Mankind wou'd have been subject to the Arbitrary Will of one Tyrant, as *Nimrod* is not long after said to have been, which might have proved the occasion of innumerable Calamities. For when there are several Republicks, or different Kingdoms, if the Inhabitants of one place happen to be oppress'd by Tyrannic Power,

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those that are able to endure the Yoke no longer, may fly into other Countries; which if there was only one Governour of the Universe they could never do, because they cou'd not go to desolate uninhabited places without apparent danger: Therefore all Men would be obnoxious to the Cruelty of one wicked Tyrant, if there was no more than one Monarchy in the World. 3. If the profligate Lives and Immoralities of the supream Governors are copied by the common People, as we find it true by a thousand Examples, then the Vices of ill Princes had in a short time been the Vices of all Mankind. On the other side, when several Kingdoms are on foot at the same time, if the Infection of Vice prevails in one place, Vertue and Good Manners flourish in another. If the truth of this Assertion wanted to be confirmed from Citations drawn out of History, we cou'd easily convince the Reader, that both under the Persian Empire which possessed a great part of *Asia*, and under the Macedonian which succeeded it; and lastly, under the Roman Monarchy when it was in its greatest extent, there was more Wickedness of all sorts committed, and the Manners of Men were generally more debauched and irregular, than when these conquer'd Countries set up several Republicks and Kingdoms of their own. 4. *Josephus*, *Ant. lib.* 1. *cap.* 4. who thinks that God would have them dispersed into several Colonies for the greater Increase and Propagation of Mankind, immediately

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immediately adds this Reason, which is not to be despised, *least they should quarrel among themselves*, (while every one would pretend to make himself Master of the neareſt and moſt fertile Lands;) *but that cultivating a greater space, they might enjoy a proportionable Increase of the Fruits of the Earth.* Therefore to close this Dissertation, for these Reasons, or some others of the like nature, it was by no means expedient that Mankind should live together in one Society and Government.

Dissertation VII.

Concerning Circumcision.

I. *The Question debated, whether the Jews borrowed this Ceremony from the Ægyptians, or they from the Jews.* II. *The Reasons anciently assigned for the Institution of it.* III. *The time when it was performed.* IV. *Other Jewish Rites examined in relation to their Original.*

I. IT hath been a Question long debated among Learned Men, Whether the Jews borrowed this Ceremony from the Ægyptians, since it appears by the undoubted Testimonies of the Ancients that other Nations, and particuly the latter, used Circumcision; or on the other hand, Whether the Ægyptians had it from

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the Jews? *Herodotus*, *l.* 2. maintains the firſt Opinion: *The Colchians, the Ægyptians, and the Æthiopians*, ſays this Hiſtorian, *are the only People that uſed Circumciſion from the beginning.* Now the *Colchians* and *Æthiopians* were Colonies of the *Ægyptians*, and therefore borrow'd without doubt, this Cuſtom from their Founders. He immediately ſubjoins; *The Phœnicians, and the Syrians, that live in* Palæſtine, *own that they learnt it of the Ægyptians.* And to ſay the truth, the People of *Ægypt*, as they were always extreamly tenacious of their own Cuſtoms, ſo they expreſs'd that Contempt for thoſe of foreign Nations, that they imagin'd themſelves to be polluted, even with keeping any Correſpondence with Strangers. *They follow the Cuſtoms of their Fathers, and learn no other*, are the words of *Herodotus*, *l.* 2. *cap.* 78. who repeats the ſame *cap.* 91. Notwithſtanding this Teſtimony is ſo plain againſt them, yet ſeveral Perſons maintain that Circumciſion began among the *Jews*, and particularly from *Abraham*, whom God commanded to obſerve it, as is evident from the 17th Chapter of *Geneſis*, as a peculiar ſign to diſtinguiſh his Poſterity from other Nations. The Learned *Spencer*, *de Legibus Moſ. lib.* 1. *cap.* 4. cites the Reaſons urged on both ſides at large, and compares them whom the Reader may conſult for his farther Satisfaction. 'Tis indeed not improbable to ſuppoſe, that though this Cuſtom had been long before obſerv'd by the *Ægyptians*, either for the ſake

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ſake of Cleanlineſs, which they principally affected, or for ſome other reaſon we are unacquainted with; yet God for another End might enjoin *Abraham* to obſerve it. And thus neither the *Jews* derived it from the *Ægyptians*, nor the *Ægyptians* from the *Jews*, although the *Ægyptian* Cuſtom gave the occaſion to the Divine Precept. It ſeems incredible to many, that ſo inconvenient and troubleſom a Ceremony, and when performed upon Perſons that were arrived to years of Maturity, ſo indecent; and laſtly, which does not in the leaſt contribute to Piety, and Good Manners, ſhould be at firſt inſtituted by God Almighty. They therefore ſuſpect that *Abraham*, who had ſeen it done in *Ægypt*, and perhaps was inform'd by ſome *Ægyptian* Servants, whom he had carried with him from *Ægypt* into *Canaan*, of the Reaſons they alledged for a Rite which ſeems otherwiſe ſo abſurd, to have mightily approv'd of it: which, when God Almighty perceiv'd, who by a wonderful Condeſcenſion accommodates himſelf to humane Imbecillity, commanded *Abraham* to obſerve that Cuſtom, which he liked in other Nations. And yet it is not to be concluded from hence, that the Circumciſion of the *Jews* and the *Ægyptians* is the ſame, becauſe, not to mention that it was not done at the ſame time, and perhaps the Rites too were different, the cauſe in both was not the ſame. *Origen*, in his Learned Book againſt *Celſus*, has a remarkable Paſſage upon this occaſion. *Lib.* 5. *p.* 263,

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of the *Cambridge* Edition. *The reason of the Jewish Circumcision was not the same with that of the Ægyptians or Colchians, and therefore we must not suppose the Circumcision was the same. As for instance; a Priest that offers Sacrifice, does not offer it to the same Divinity, though he seems to perform those sacred Rites after the same manner; and as he that prays does not say the same Prayer with another, although he supplicates for the same things; so likewise though one be circumcised, we must not infer that there is no real difference between his Circumcision, and that of other People. For the Intention, the Law, and Will of him that circumcises, makes it a different matter.*

II. The ancient *Jews* were used to assign four Reasons why this Covenant was rather instituted in the Prepuce, than any other part of the Body. The first is, χαλεπῆς νόσου καὶ δυσιάτου πάθους ἀπολλαγή, ἣν ἄνθρακα καλοῦσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ καίεσθαι ἐπιφόμενον; *the Prevention of a troublesom Disease, and hard to be cured, which they call a Carbuncle, because it is apt to be inflamed.* These are the expreſs words of *Philo*, in his Treatise concerning Circumcision, who was of Opinion, That those that were uncircumcised, were more obnoxious to this Distemper than the Circumcised. *Cornelius Celsus, l.* 6. *c.* 18. §. 5. teaches us a way how to cure this Disease; but I very much question whether it visits the Uncircumcised, more than the Circumcised, provided they live chastly.

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The other is, ἡ δι' ὅλου τοῦ σώματος καθαρότης, πρὸς τὸ ἀρμόττειν τάξει ἱερωμένη; *the Purity of the whole Body, which becomes those of the sacerdotal Function:* For which reason the *Ægyptian* Priests shaved their Bodies, because something stuck to the Hair and Body, which was to be cleansed. But too great an Affectation of Cleanliness is troublesom and superstitious, as a moderate Care, especially in a hot Climate, is both wholesom and commendable.

The third is, ἡ πρὸς καρδίαν ὁμοιότης τοῦ περιτμηθέντος μέρους; *the resemblance of the circumcised part with the Heart:* So that the Circumcision of this part was as it were a Symbol of the Circumcision of the Heart; that is to say, of a Mind purged from all unlawful Affections; which is the reason that the *Jews* are frequently upbraided with an *uncircumcised Heart.* See *Leviticus* 26. 41. But *Philo,* and some others, believed, that the renouncing of all dishonest Pleasures was chiefly signified by it: *Because among the great variety of Pleasures, that of carnal Copulation is said to exceed the rest; our Lawgivers thought fit to circumcise the Instrument of Coition, obscurely intimating hereby, a Circumcision of all superfluous and immoderate Pleasure, and not of one alone; but this being the greatest, and that to which Mankind expresses the fiercest Inclination, comprehends all the rest.* And this indeed is agreeable to the Custom of the Eastern Nations, who instructed their Disciples, not only by words, but things in order to make

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make the greater Impression upon their Minds.

The fourth, and the most necessary of all, as *Philo* tells us, was ἡ πρὸς πολυγονίαν κατασκευή; *a Preparative to beget a numerous Issue*; *for*, if we may believe him, *those Nations which use Circumcision, are infinitely more populous than others.* But, with Submission be it spoken, this Reason seems to be none of the truest, as is evident by the Example of the Modern *Jews* and *Mahumetans.* But perhaps *Philo* was of this Opinion, because he saw his Country-men the *Ægyptians* begot abundance of Children, which is not however to be ascribed to their Circumcision, but to the Disposition of their Climate and Soil; or as some would have it, to the Water of *Nile.* *Rabbi Levi Barcinonensis*, who has plainly and briefly expounded the *Mosaical* Precepts, after he has told us of I know not what Perfection of Body and Soul, which, as he pretends, is either signified, or conferr'd by the *Jewish* Circumcision, adds this as his last and strongest Reason, that *God* for ever blessed hereby distinguishes his Select People from others, by setting a Mark on their Bodies. And pursuant to this 'tis worthy of Observation, that in the *East*, and in *Greece*, and *Italy*, Men were anointed naked, or walked in the Sun, or used Athletical Exercises, or washed themselves in Company with others; whereby 'twas an impossible matter to conceal Circumcision: for which reason those Persons that had no mind to pass for *Jews*, got

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got a Trick of drawing forward the Prepuce, as you may find in *Grotius* upon the 1st Epistle of the *Corinthians*, Ch. 7. v. 18. The same Artifice was used by those under the Emperor *Domitian*, who thought fit to live within the City, and yet wou'd not pay the Tributes that were imposed upon those of the *Jewish* Nation; for they so well dissembled the matter, that when they were searched they cou'd not be discovered. *I remember*, says *Suetonius*, in his Life of *Domitian*, ch. 12. *I was present when an old Fellow, ninety years of Age, was examin'd by the Procurator and a large Assembly, whether he was circumcised or no.*

III. As for the time of its Celebration, it was precisely observ'd on the eighth Day after the Birth of the Child; which is to be understood of their Children or Servants that were born at home, for they could not circumcise the rest, before they had them. Nothing but Sickness, as the Rabbies inform us, cou'd excuse the deferring of it beyond this time; and indeed, since this Ceremony was perform'd upon an Infant with much more Ease and Decency, than it cou'd be upon those of a riper Age, it seems agreeable to believe, that a positive time was appointed, least by degrees it should be deferr'd too far, and at last wholly laid aside. But besides the express Words of the Law, the *Jews* might be the more inclin'd to observe the Execution of it upon the eighth Day, because, as we find in *Origen, contra Celf. l. 5.* the *Colchians*, the *Ægyptians*

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gyptians and *Iſraelites*, uſed it later; by which Circumſtance they ſuppoſed their Circumciſion to be diſtinguiſhed from all others. The voluntary Neglect of it, according to ſome Chriſtian Interpreters, was puniſhed by Death, according to others by Excommunication; however, this is certain, that an uncircumciſed *Hebrew*, if he were publickly known to be ſuch, forfeited all the Rights and Privileges of a Member of that Republick; and if he was not actually baniſhed, was reckon'd to be no better than a Heathen. 'Tis probable, that the Author of theſe Verſes, which are to be found among the Fragments of *Petronius*, meant this, which without doubt he had heard from ſome *Jews* of his Age.

Judæus licet & porcinum nomen adoret,
Et celli (i.e. Aſini) *ſummas advocet auriculas;*
Ni tamen & ferro ſucciderit *inguinis oram,*
Et niſi nudatum ſolverit arte caput.
Exemptus populo *Graiam migrabit ad urbem,*
Et non jejunâ ſabbata lege premet.
Una eſt nobilitas, argumentúmq; coloris
Ingenui, timidas non habuiſſe manus.

The Pagans erroneouſly believ'd, that a Hog was worſhipt by the *Jews*, becauſe they abſtain'd from eating of that Creature; the other Calumny of their adoring an Aſs's Head, is indeed groſſer; but after this manner either *Petronius*, or ſome one elſe, deſcribes the *Jewiſh* Religion. However, he tells us, that the Adoration of theſe Deities was not ſufficient for the *Jews*;

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Jews; but that unless he was likewise circumcised, he was not esteem'd a *Jew*, but reckon'd as a *Greek*; who being descended from *Abraham*, presum'd to worship the God of the *Jews*, uncircumcised.

IV. What has been said of Circumcision, may be affirm'd of several other Rites and Ceremonies in use with the *Hebrews*, *viz.* that whatever laudable or innocent Institutions their Neighbours the Heathens had, the Patriarchs might confirm with their Example. Now, as when we go to handle any thing of value which we mightily esteem, or when we are to appear upon any solemn occasion, we wash our Hands, least any Filth or Dirt should stick to them, and put on our cleanest Apparel: So those, that were going upon the Exercise of Religious Duties, thought it a heinous Sin to approach the Altar with unwashed Hands, and dirty Linen; not that Nastiness was of it self hated by God Almighty, but because it seem'd to intimate a Neglect of the Business then in doing, and might give those Persons, who judge of things by exterior Appearances, a Contempt and Disrelish for sacred things. And as the Patriarchs were not unacquainted with this Reason, can any one think it strange that it was approved by them? If any one pretends to maintain, that the Patriarchs were the Inventors of this, and the like Rites; in the first place 'tis certain he is destitute of the Authority of the Scripture, which no where affirms so much: and secondly, it will be

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be a difficult matter to prove, that the most flourishing Nations in the World borrowed these Rites from the *Hebrews*, who were a despicable and unknown People, and neither for Magnificence or Antiquity to be compar'd with the *Ægyptians* and *Babylonians*. Thus for instance, we read, *Gen. c.* 28. 18. that *Jacob* erected a Stone, and poured Oyl upon the top of it. 'Tis evident from several Authors that the *Phœnicians*, and particularly the *Syrians*, used to consecrate rude, unwrought Stones, and anointed them with Oyl, and several believe that they imitated *Jacob* in this particular, and that from them this Custom was propagated to other Nations. But certainly 'tis much more probable, that *Jacob* follow'd a Custom used long before his time, and that one Man imitated those populous Nations, where he lived, than that these Nations should tread after the Footsteps of a Person who was in a manner unknown to them, and differ'd from them in his Sentiments of Religion. Before God Almighty had revealed to *Moses* after what manner he would be worshipped, and what sacred Rites he would have observ'd, pious Men were left to their own liberty, to follow what Rites they pleased, provided the Religion of the Mind, which is the only true Religion, was not violated by them: for as Words depend from use, which alone stamps a peculiar Force and Meaning upon them, so the Signification of all external indifferent Ceremonies is just such, as the Person that uses them, does make them.

Disserta-

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Dissertation VIII.

Concerning the Divine Appearances in the Old Testament.

I. *That* Moses *no where gives us a full account of them.* II. *Of those that happen'd by night, or when they were asleep.* III. *Of those that were seen in the day-time.* IV. *By what Means they were able to distinguish them from Humane Impostures.* V. *How they knew God from a Good Angel; and lastly, a Good Angel from an Evil Spirit.*

I. THough *Moses* makes frequent mention of the Divine Appearances, yet he no where gives us so full a Description of them as to let us know by what particular Tokens, the Ancients, to whom God vouchsafed to reveal himself, were able to discover him. Therefore we have nothing more left us to do, but out of the several Histories we find scatter'd up and down the sacred Writers, to gather as many Circumstances of this matter as we can. Briefly, then, both God and Angels are said to have appeared by night and by day, in Dreams, and in waking to *Abraham* and several more beside him.

II. By

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II. By night he ſaid thoſe things to *Abraham* which we read of Chapter the fifteenth, where God is ſaid to have ſpoken to him *in a Viſion*; which ſeems to be the ſame, as *in the Viſions of the night*, Ch. 46. v. 2. In the ſame, *viz.* the 15th Chapter, *Abraham*, being faſt aſleep, hears the Voice of God calling out to him. *Jacob* likewiſe ſees, and hears God in his ſleep, ch. 27. 12, 13. and elſewhere. Nay, God warns *Abimelech*, ch. 20. 20. and *Laban*, ch. 31. 24. when they were aſleep. Now it appears from the above-mentioned places, that they heard a certain Voice in their Sleep; but it is not ſo perſpicuous, from whence the Sound of the Words ſeemed to proceed; neither does *Moſes* inform us what ſort of Ideas, or Images, affected their Minds, when they underſtood that God ſpoke to them. Perhaps no Impreſſion was made upon them, but only a Voice heard, as it is evident by the Hiſtory of *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 3. who heard a Voice which awaked him. Others in their Sleep thought they heard a Voice, and made anſwer again, as *Abimelech*, ch. 20. and *Abraham*, ch. 15. *Jacob* alſo ſaw a certain Reſemblance of God ſitting upon a Ladder, which ſeem'd to ſpeak, *ch.* 27. 19. But *Moſes* does not ſubjoin what it was; however, it appears to have been the ſame which was ſeen by thoſe that were awake, of which we ſhall diſcourſe anon.

If any one ſhall here enquire, how they diſtinguiſhed Divine Dreams from thoſe that were purely

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purely natural? 'Tis easier to acquaint him with what others have conjectur'd, than to give any positive Determination of the matter. But the Mischief is, that what they tell us upon this occasion, is not drawn from their own Experience, nor from the Relation of those who have actually tried these things, but from certain Philosophical Conjectures, as we may see in *Jamblichus de Myster. Sect.* 3. *cap.* 2. and *Seqq.* and *J. Smith*, who in his *Dissertation of Prophecy*, ch. 3. and 4. has gathered all the Opinions of the Ancients about this difficult Point. If we were obliged, out of the several Conjectures, to choose that which pleases us most, we should believe that those speak most judiciously to the business in hand, who affirm, that Divine Dreams are no otherwise to be distinguished from the rest, than that, 1. They have none of those confused and idle Phantasms that delude us in other Dreams, but distinctly represented to our Minds whatever Things or Being God was pleased to send, without any mixture of foreign Images or Words; so that every thing was very plainly seen, or heard. 2. That they are more lively than other Dreams, and make a more forcible Impression upon the Mind, so that they were deeply fixt in the Memory, which however did not always happen, as appears by *Nebuchadnezzar's* Dream, *Dan.* 2. where he is said to have forgotten it, although he knew that *Daniel*, when he remembred him of it, spoke the Truth to him. 3. That they should hear God, or his Angels,

ſo ſpeak to them, that they ſhould be fully convinc'd that their Dreams proceeded from them. Now if all theſe Circumſtances concurred in a Dream, there would be no room left to doubt, but that they were divinely inſpired, eſpecially when it was a received Opinion, that God Almighty reveal'd himſelf oftentimes to Men in Dreams, admoniſhing of ſeveral things when they were aſleep, and that theſe were the true Characteriſticks of Divine Dreams. Neither is it to be ſuppoſed, that God, who ſees and hears all things, ſhould ſuffer thoſe that love him to be impoſed upon by unclean Spirits, or even perplexed by the fantaſtical Operations of Nature it ſelf, ſo as to be deceived in an Affair of this conſequence.

III. To come now to thoſe Divine Appearances that affected them by day, and when they were awake. 2. A Voice was heard without any Reſemblance, or Image, which was enough to have awaked them, though they were aſleep. Thus *Samuel* being call'd by name, awaked, and diſtinctly heard the other words which God ſpoke to him, 1 *Sam.* 3. Thus likewiſe *Elias* heard a ſtrong and vehement Wind, overturning Mountains, and bruiſing the Rocks before the Lord: after this he perceiv'd a Commotion, and after that he ſaw a Fire, then he heard the whiſtling of a ſmall Wind; which being done, a Voice came to him, ſaying, *What doſt thou do here*, Elias? 1 *Kings* 19. 11. and *Seqq.* without any Form, or Repreſentation at all. 2. Sometimes

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times that Voice was ſent down from Heaven, as that which *Abraham* heard, when he was going to ſacrifice his Son *Iſaac*. 3. A Voice at other times did proceed neither from Heaven, or the Clouds only, but from the midſt of a Fire, or Storm, as *Exod.* 19. and 20. and no Form was diſcover'd of him that ſpoke: After this manner God ſpeaks to *Job* out of a Whirlwind. 4. A Reſemblance ſhowing it ſelf to Men that were awake, ſometimes diſcours'd with them, and did ſeveral things in their ſight; ſo that one Man thought he ſpoke all the while with another Man; whereas it appears by what follows, and the whole Narration, that God, or an Angel, lay hid under a humane Shape, as *Gen.* 18. and elſewhere. See likewiſe *Judg.* 13. 5. and *Seqq.* Oftentimes too God appear'd like a Man in Prophetical Viſions by night, as *Iſa.* 6. 1. *Ezek.* 1. 26. I am of Opinion, that as often as we meet with this Expreſſion, *and God was ſeen*, as in *Gen.* ch. 12. 7. that a humane Shape was ſeen.

Thus we have ſhown how many ſeveral ways God is ſaid to have revealed himſelf to thoſe that were aſleep, and awake; but ſo, that we did not make any Diſtinction between the Divine Appearances, and thoſe of Angels: It remains for us now to enquire, by what means they cou'd ſecure themſelves from humane Impoſtures; and next how they knew God from a Good Angel, and a Good Angel from a Bad One, whenever any of the above-mention'd Revelations happen'd to them?

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IV. That there was no humane Fraud or Impoſture uſed, if a Voice was heard, did appear from hence. 1. Becauſe ſometimes this Voice was much greater than a Man's; ſuch was that, which from the top of Mount *Sinai*, a very high Mountain, was on every ſide heard by the whole People of *Iſrael*. St. *John*, *Rev.* 1. 10. compares the Voice of Chriſt appearing, to the Sound of a Trumpet; nay, to the Noiſe of the Sea, or a mighty River, in the 15th Verſe of the ſame Chapter. 2. Becauſe it came from thoſe places where no Man was, or from whence it cou'd not be ſent by Men, as when *Samuel* heard a Voice proceeding from the place where the Ark was, and *Abraham* and the *Iſraelites* from the Clouds, and the midſt of Fire. They ſometimes diſcover'd an Angel diſcourſing with them under a humane Shape, by the Majeſty of his Looks, and the unuſual Splendor of his Eyes. The Wife of *Manoah* in *Jud.* 13. 6. *The Man of God*, ſays ſhe of the Angel whom ſhe ſaw, *comes towards me, and his Look is like the Look of an Angel of God, very terrible.* By this means *Nebuchadnezzar* ſeems to have known the Angel among the Children, whom he commanded to be thrown into the fiery Furnace: *The Reſemblance of the fourth*, ſays he, *is like that of one of the Sons of God.* Sometimes miraculous Actions, that were above the Power of humane Performance, were added, as not to mention any more, we may gather from the Hiſtory of *Gideon*, *Jud.* 6. 17. I don't now ſpeak of the Event

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Event of things foretold, for the Question at present is, How at the very moment when an Appearance happen'd, they were able to distinguish it from a humane Trick, before the Truth of those things they predicted, was ratified by the Event?

V. The other Question is much more difficult, *viz.* By what means they knew, whether *the Highest*, and *the God of all Gods*, appear'd, or (if I may be allow'd the Expression) one of the inferior Gods, or good Angels, dispatched for that Message by him? The ancient *Jews* don't seem to have sufficiently considered this matter, since 'tis impossible to find out in any Narration of these Appearances, whether God himself or an Angel speaks; and God and his Angels are said to have appear'd promiscuously in one and the same ἐπιφανεία. See *Gen.* ch. 16, 12. ch. 22, v. 1. 11, 12. *Exod.* 3. 2. and *Seqq.* So, though, *Exod.* 20. the Lord God is said to have spoken, yet the old *Hebrews* were of Opinion, that the Law was delivered by Angels, as appears from *Galatians* 3. 19. *Heb.* 2, 2. *Act.* 7, v. 38. 53. and the reason of it seems to be this, because good Angels never tell or command Men any thing in their own name, but behave themselves as the Ambassadors and Ministers of the High God. Hence St. *Austin*, *Quæst. in Genes.* 37. and elsewhere has observed, that it is not so much the Angel that speaks, as God in the Angel. *Perhaps*, says he of *Abraham*, *he understood it was God that spoke to him, by some plain and manifest Proofs of the Divine Majesty.*

Which being ſo, it ſignified nothing to know whether God or an Angel ſpoke to them. The *Chaldeans* indeed, whoſe Doctrine *Jamblichus* delivers in his Book of Myſteries, *Sect. 2. ch. 3. & Seqq.* pretended to know, *what was the certain Token of the Preſence of God, or an Angel, or an Arch-angel, or a Dæmon, or a Prince, or a Soul?* This was *Porphyry*'s Queſtion, in which *Jamblichus* largely endeavours to ſatisfy him; but I ſhall not here cite thoſe Paſſages in him, not that every thing he there ſays is groundleſs and chimerical, but becauſe the Brevity of our Work will not allow us to be more prolix upon this Subject.

The pious Men among the ancient *Hebrews* don't ſeem to have been very apprehenſive of the Frauds of Evil Angels in this Affair, becauſe they did not queſtion but that the Good Angels, who were appointed by God Almighty to protect the Vertuous, wou'd fruſtrate any ſuch Deſign. And indeed it was not agreeable to the Divine Goodneſs, to expoſe thoſe that fear'd him, to invincible Temptations, which he had certainly done, if there were no exteriour Signs to diſtinguiſh Evil Spirits from the Good, or if thoſe Characteriſticks, which were looked upon by all Mankind to be infallible Indications of a Divine, or Angelical Apparition, might be uſurped by a wicked Power. Nevertheleſs I will not deny, but that among a vicious reprobate People, whom God Almighty may be ſuppoſed to have deliver'd over to the Devil, it might ſo fall out, that unclean Spirits

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sometimes deceived them with the like Appearances, as we have mention'd. But this was not the case of the Righteous.

Dissertation IX.

Concerning the Subversion of Sodom, *and the Neighbouring Cities.*

I. *The Occasion of this Dissertation.* II. *The Situation of* Sodom, *and the Neighbouring Cities.* III. *The Sins they were guilty of.* IV. *A Description of their Subversion.* V. *The* Lacus Asphaltites, *or Dead Sea, an everlasting Monument of their Destruction.* VI. *A Description of the Country about it, from whence the seventh Verse in St.* Jude's *Catholick Epistle is explained, and some other places of the New Testament.* VII. *This History gave occasion to some remarkable Circumstances in the Story of* Baucis *and* Philemon, *which Observation is illustrated by several Examples.* VIII. *Whether the Subversion of these Cities, situated upon the River* Jordan, *is to be ascribed to a Miracle, or is the common Method of God Almighty's Providence, when he punishes Offenders.*

I. AMong those other Punishments which the sacred Historians tell us the Divine

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Justice has inflicted upon wicked Men, few of them are more wonderful than the sudden Destruction of *Sodom*, and the adjoyning Cities. However, the Interpreters of the Scripture, when they come to this surprizing Relation, scarce seem to have employ'd the care they usually bestow upon other places. For which reason we judged it convenient to publish this Dissertation, where we have treated this Matter more amply than the narrow limits of our Commentary wou'd allow. All the Translators which it has been my fortune hitherto to see, as if they imagined there was no difficulty in the case, or else had nothing to remark upon so important a Scene, barely tell us, that this Country was burnt, and subverted by fire from Heaven; and having done so, think they have discharged all that is required from a Translator. The truth is, what we have heard, and imbibed from our Infancy, becomes at last so familiar to us, that we receive it almost without Examination. But as I have read this History with no little Application, so methinks I have discover'd several Particulars in it worthy of Observation; by which not only this Narration may be wonderfully illustrated, but many other Passages of the H. Bible conveniently expounded. What we have therefore observed upon this Occasion, we have thrown into the following Dissertation; which if we have not handled with that Accuracy as the Dignity of the Subject seems to deserve, yet since we have done

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done it to the best of our Abilities, we hope the Learned Reader will favourably receive it.

II. Before we examine the Destruction it self, it will be necessary for us to give a short Description of the Situation of *Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, *Admah* and *Zeboim*; because by this means we shall the better understand how we come to see nothing but a stinking Lake, where this most delightful Country formerly stood. *Moses* thus describes the Situation of these Cities, *Gen.* 13.10. where he relates after what manner *Lot* and *Abraham* parted: *But* Lot *lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of* Jordan, *that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *even as the garden of the Lord, or the land of* Egypt, *as thou comest unto* Zoar.

In the first place from hence we gather, that these Cities were situated on both sides of the River *Jordan*; for *the plain of Jordan* is here called, ἡ περίχωρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, as the Septuagint has rightly translated, rather following the Sense than the genuine Signification of the *Hebrew* word *Chicchar*, which properly signifies a plain Country, as we find *Gen.* 19. v. 17. where it is opposed to a mountainous Region. For this reason in following times this Country was called the μεγαπέδιον, or Great Field; as likewise αὐλών, or the Valley. To make this more evidently appear, we will here set down the words of *Josephus*, who thus describes it in the fifth

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Book *de Bello Jud.* Chap. 27. *Near to it, * we find a barren Mountain, but of a vast length, for Northwards it reaches as far as the Country of the* Scythopolitæ, *and towards the South it extends as far as the Land of* Sodom, *and the bounds of the Dead Sea. Opposite to it, beyond* Jordan, *lies a Mountain which begins from* Julias, *and the Northern Country, and Southwards spreads as far as* Somorra *which adjoins to* Petra, *a City of* Arabia. *And here too is a Mountain, called the* Iron Mountain, *which reaches as far as the Country of* Moab. The Valley between these Mountains is the same we are now talking of, and *Josephus* gives us the following Description of it. *The Country which lies in the middle between these Mountains, is called the* ΜΕΓΑΠΕΔΙΟΝ, *or Great Field, and reaches from the Village of* Ginnabrin *to the* Lacus Asphaltites. *'Tis a Thousand two hundred furlongs in length, and sixscore in breadth. The River* Jordan *runs through the middle of it.* The same place, from the nature of its Situation, is call'd Αὐλὼν, or *the Valley*; although St. *Jerome*, in his *Loci Hæbraici*, erroneously pretends, that it is a Hebrew word. *Aulon, says he, is not a Greek word, as some Persons imagine, but Hebrew: 'Tis the name of a large and spacious Valley of a prodigious length, which is surrounded on every side by a continued ridge of Mountains; which begin from Mount* Libanus *and beyond it, and reach to the Desart of* Paran.

* Meaning Jericho.

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Paran. *There are several noble Cities in this* Aulon, *or Valley, as* Scythopolis, Tiberias, *and the* Lake *near it*; *nay* Jericho, *the* Dead Sea, *and all the Countries about it through which the River* Jordan *runs, which arises from the Fountain* Paneas, *and so falls into the* Dead Sea. The upper parts of this capacious Vale were exceeding fertile, full of Pastures, and planted with all sorts of Trees; so that as *Josephus*, *l.* 3. *de Bell. Jud. cap.* 4. informs us, it would invite even those who are the least inclined to such a Life, to cultivate it. But the middle parts, except where the River *Jordan* water'd them, were burnt up in the Summer, as we are told by *Josephus* in the above-mentioned place. *In the Summer*, says he, *all this Plain is burnt up, and by reason of the extream Vehemence of the Heat, the Air becomes very unhealthful, for 'tis all parch'd, but where* Jordan *runs*; *on the Banks of which River there are the most beautiful Groves of Palm-trees.* But here we have to do with neither of these parts, but only with the lowest, which reaches from *Jericho* to the Mountains of *Idumea*, where now the *Lacus Asphaltites* is, of which more hereafter. In the mean time, we must observe by the bye, that the Waters of *Jordan*, by reason of the perpetual ridge of Hills that shut it up on every side from East and West, had no Outlet at all, but ran to the Southward.

In the second place, we must not lightly pass over what *Moses* says, that the Southern part of this

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this Valley, as you go to *Zoar*, was watered like the Paradise of the Lord, or the Land of *Egypt*. All which words require a particular Illustration by themselves; but first of all we will show by the Testimony of other Writers, that this tract of Ground was exceedingly well watered, which is a thing of great importance in the present Disquisition. To begin then with the Country about *Jericho*: *Strabo* in his sixteenth Book, *pag.* 525. of *Isaac Casaubon*'s Edition at *Geneva*, affirms, that it is plentifully stored with Water. *Jericho* is a Plain, on every side surrounded with Hills, and in some parts bending like a Theatre. It abounds with Palm-trees mixt, and several other Trees, but it particularly abounds with the former. 'Tis an hundred Furlongs in length, and is *all well watered*, and full of *Inhabitants*. Now how this Country comes to be so plentifully water'd, *Josephus* informs us in the above-mentioned place, in the following words: Near *Jericho* is a plentiful Spring, and most convenient for watering. We shall not here set down what he relates of an Alteration made in this Water by *Elisha*, nor what he tells us of the great Wholesomness of this Well, as being borrowed from an uncertain Tradition; but thus he goes on: *It waters* a far greater space than any *other Fountain*, *viz.* seventy Furlongs long, and twenty in breadth. Southwards of the Province of *Jericho* he describes the Brook, or Vale, of *Kedron*, which carries Water from *Jerusalem* to the *Dead Sea*; but

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but becauſe *Kedron* is frequently mentioned as a dry Valley, and there is ſome reaſon to doubt whether it was a Valley, or a Brook, we ſhall leave the matter undetermin'd, and proceed to the Eaſtern Bank of the *Lacus Aſphaltites*.

In this place was a famous Fountain, called *Callirrhoe*, to which *Herod* went from *Jericho* when he was ſick, as *Joſephus* tells us, *lib.* 17. of his *Jewiſh Antiquities*, ch. 8. *Croſſing* Jordan he went to the hot Waters near *Callirrhoe*, which, beſides their Virtue in all Diſeaſes, may be ſafely drunk. This Water runs into the *Dead Sea*. *Pliny* places this Fountain on the South-ſide of the Lake; for after he has ſaid, *lib.* 5. *cap.* 16. that Eaſtwards it looks upon *Arabia Nomadum*, and *Macherus* on *the South*, he adds; On the ſame ſide is a hot Spring of a Medicinal Virtue, call'd *Callirrhoe*, denoting the Excellency of its Waters by its Name.

From the Eaſt too the River *Arnon* falls into the *Lacus Aſphaltites*, *which ariſing in the Borders of* Arabia, as we find in *Joſephus*, *l.* 4. *c.* 4. of his *Jewiſh Antiquities*; *and running through* the whole extent of the Deſart, falls into the *Dead Sea*, and divides the Country of the *Moabites* from that of the *Amorites*.

More to the Southward was the *Brook Zered*, mentioned by *Moſes*, *Numb.* 21. 12. *Deut.* 2. 13, 14. and this likewiſe ſeems to fall into the *Lacus Aſphaltites*. From whence we may gather, that all the lower part of *Jordan*, where the *Dead Sea* now is, was not only watered with the Streams of

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that River, but likewise with several Fountains and Brooks which ran into it. Now since all this Water had no Inlet into the Sea, it must of necessity follow, that it was all swallowed up in the Sands, every way encompassing it, which might so much the more easily be done, because the Inhabitants of hot Countries use to divide their Rivers into several smaller Branches for the benefit of their Fields; and this is the reason that these Rivers, being thus exhausted in several places, are not able to carry their Waters to the Sea. We brought the like instance of *Chrysorrhoas*, in *Gen.* 2. 11. I know indeed the Counterfeit *Aristeas* very gravely tells us, that *Jordan* carries its Waters into another River near the Country of the *Ptolomies*, which River has a Passage into the Sea. But every body knows this to be a meer Fiction, and are satisfied that the *Lacus Asphaltites* has no Outlet.

But to return to *Moses*, he not only informs us, that the lower-most part of the Plain of *Jordan* was well water'd; but he compares it to two well water'd places, and that part of it, which by reason it receiv'd so great Plenty of Water, was exceeding fruitful, he thus describes, as the Garden of the Lord, as the Land of *Ægypt*, in the way that leads to *Zoar*. This is the true Order of *Moses*'s words; which if they were to be read as we find them in our Bibles, it would be an *Hyperbaton*, therefore they are to be placed as we have done them. For from this mountainous Country, which we have already described out of

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of *Josephus*, where *Abraham* pitched his Tents, when *Lot* parted from him, as he went to the oppoſite Hills beyond *Jordan* by *Zoar*, he firſt ſaw the Vale of *Jericho*, watered with a moſt plentiful Fountain, then *Jordan* and *Callirrhoe*. Therefore this Plain by which Men went to *Zoar*, very well deſerved to be called well-watered. An Example of the like Perturbation of the words we find in *Geneſis* 25. 18. But if any one will not admit of a Trajection here, the *Syrian* Interpreter publiſhed in the *London Polyglots*, furniſhes us with another convenient Reading, where for *Zoar* we meet *Zoan*, that is *Tanis*, mentioned by *Moſes*, *Numb.* 13. 23. and *Pſal.* 78. 12. And indeed to deſcribe any well-watered place, one cou'd not produce a fitter inſtance than the *Lower Ægypt*, and particularly where the Road was from *Canaan* to *Tanis*. For it was not only abundantly refreſhed with the *Nile*, cut into ſeveral Branches, but it was full of Lakes and Moraſſes. To confirm which Aſſertion, becauſe 'tis ſufficiently known to all that are not utterly unacquainted with the Chorography of *Ægypt*, I will only alledge the Teſtimony of *Strabo*, *lib.* 17. *p.* 552. Above the *Mendeſian* and *Tanitic* Mouth of the *Nile*, is a vaſt Lake, *&c.* then the *Tanitic* Mouth, and the *Tanitic* Province, in which is *Tanis*, a famous City. Between the *Tanitick* and *Peluſiack* Mouth (through which thoſe that come from *Canaan* to theſe places muſt travel) there are Pools, and great and continued Moraſſes, full of Villages.

But

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But 'tis wholly indifferent to us whether Lection, *viz.* that of the common Bibles, or that of the *Syriac* Interpreter, the Reader will be pleased to follow, provided he remembers that the Plain of *Jordan* is compared to the *Lower Ægypt*, upon the account of its well-watered Pastures. As for the Paradise of the Lord, to which it is likewise compared, we cannot say any thing of it here, which we have not taken notice of in our * Annotations.

* See the 12th Dissertation.

In the third place we must take notice, that there were *Pits of Bitumen* in this Tract of ground, as *Moses* informs us, *Gen.* 14. 10. where after he has related the Overthrow of the Men of *Sodom*, *the Valley of* Siddim, says he, *was full of Slime-pits, and the Kings of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *fled, and were there destroyed.* From this remarkable Passage we gather, that even before there was any such thing as the *Lacus Asphaltites*, that Plenty of Bitumen boil'd up out of the ground, and there was used to be got. Which being diluted by the confluence of so many Waters, it becomes Liquid, as we are told by *Pliny*, *lib.* 35. *c.* 15. though it seems to have been thick before, for the reason alledged in our Commentary. Least the Reader should be at a loss, we have transcribed *Pliny*'s words, and some others of the like nature, concerning Bitumen out of other Authors. 'Bitumen, says 'he, *which in some places is a Mud, in others an* 'Earth, is a perfect *Limus*, or Mud, as it comes 'out

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'out of the Lake in *Judæa*; but in *Syria* near 'a Sea-port Town, called *Sidon*, it is an Earth: 'Both of them may be made thick and con- 'ſiſtent. There is likewiſe a ſort of Liquid *Bi-* 'tumen, as that which comes from *Zant* and 'Babylon, &c. All which the Greeks call *Piſ-* 'ſaſphalſon, from the likeneſs of Pitch and Bitu- 'men. *Conſult* Dioſcorides, *lib.*1. *c.* 99, & 100. *Strabo* in abundance of places tells us, that Bitumen was got both out of the Earth, and out of Fountains. Theſe are his words, *lib.*16. *p.*511. Great quantities of Bitumen grow in *Babylonia*, of which *Eratoſthenes* ſpeaks after the following manner. The Liquid *Bitumen*, which they call *Naphtha*, is to be found in *Suſiane the dry*, which will grow hard in *Babylonia*, a Well of which ſtuff there is near *Naphtha*. Conſult likewiſe what he ſays of a Fountain of Bitumen in the Province of the *Apolloniata*, *lib.*7. *p.*219. and the ſeveral Authors cited by *Iſ. Cauſaubon* upon that place.

But as *Moſes* mentions Pits of Bitumen in the Plain of *Jordan*, ſo likewiſe does *Herodotus*, *l.* 6. *c.* 119. tell us of a Pit which affords three ſorts of things, for they draw Bitumen, Salt, and Oyl out of it, after the following manner: 'Tis drawn out by a Bucket, with half a Bottle faſtned to it, which ſerves inſtead of a Picher; this being let down into the Pit, whatever it brings up is immediately poured into a Ciſtern, and being poured out of that into another, it produces three ſeveral things; it affords Bitumen

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and Salt preſently, *&c.* But this was Liquid Bitumen; ſome of the Ancients have even taken notice of the *Caverns* from whence the *Babylonians* had it dry. *Curtius, lib. 5. c. 1.* There is a Cavern in that place, from which a Fountain throws up a prodigious quantity of Bitumen, ſo that 'tis manifeſtly plain that the *Babylonian* Walls of mighty Workmanſhip, were cemented with the Bitumen of this Fountain.

This therefore was the Nature of this Soil, this the Situation of the Cities in the Plain of *Jordan.* Upon which it happened, as we ſhall hereafter ſee, that as the Ground ſunk down, a great Lake of Bitumen ſprung up in its room.

III. As the *Babylonian* Soil was wonderfully fertile, by reaſon it was irrigated by the *Euphrates,* and the nature of the Country; ſo the lowermoſt part of this large Plain was for the ſame reaſon of equal Fecundity with it. And as the *Babylonians* who flowed in all manner of Plenty, were addicted to all ſorts of Luſt; ſo the *Sodomites* and their Neighbours, by the ſame Infirmity of humane Nature, (which uſes to abuſe God Almighty's Gifts) abandoned themſelves to all the degrees of Wickedneſs, as *Moſes* particularly informs us, *Gen.* 18, & 19. *After Men were ſatiated with good things,* ſays *Philo* in his Book concerning *Abraham, this Satiety, after the manner of the World, ſoon begot Wantonneſs.* If we may take *Cicero*'s word for it, Men derive their Manners, not ſo much from the Seed of their Parents, as from thoſe things which

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which are afforded by the nature of the Soil, and our manner of Living. The *Carthaginians* were not born deceitful and Liars, but made so by the Nature of the place; for by reason of the abundance of their Harbours, and their frequent Dealings with Merchants and Strangers, the desire of Gain put them upon the Art of tricking and cheating. The *Genoeses* inhabiting a Hilly Country, were hard and clownish; the very Nature of their Soil taught them this, which produces nothing but with much Cultivating and Labour. The *Campanians* were always proud, by reason of the great Fertility of their Land, the Plenty of Fruits, the Wholesomeness and Beauty of their City. From this Abundance and Superfluity of every thing, arose that Pride which disposed these People to demand of the ancient *Romans*, that one of the Consuls should be chosen out of *Capua*; and afterwards that Luxury which helped to ruine *Hannibal*, whom all the Difficulties and Fatigues of War could not conquer. *Cicero* argues after this rate, in his Oration *de lege Argrario*, delivered before the People against *Rullus*, and likewise in another, which he spoke in the Senate-house: He is utterly against the sending a Colony to that place, which by reason of the Fruitfulness of the Soil, and the Plenty of all things, is said to have begotten Pride and Cruelty. All which things exactly proved true in the Inhabitants of the Plain of *Jordan*, whose Soil, that we may observe this by the by, was not unlike that of the *Campanians*, which to this

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day abounds in Bitumen and Sulphur.

Now these People, as they were corrupted by Prosperity, so it seems Adversity made not the least Impression upon their Minds, or reform'd their Manners. Although they were conquer'd by the *Etymæans* and their Confederates, which Afflictions might have awaken'd a less flagitious People to a Sense of their Duty; yet it wrought not any good Effects upon these Debauchees, who, as soon as they were delivered out of Captivity, carried their old Customs and Vices home along with them. See the 14th Chapter of *Genesis*. Now the Sinfulness of these People did not only consist in this, that they were given to Uncleanness and Lasciviousness, as appears from *Gen.* ch. 19. but in all manner of Wickedness. Certainly the Debauchery of that place could admit of no new Accessions, but was already arrived to its heighth, where they cou'd think of abusing Strangers after so abominable a manner. Therefore *Josephus* deservedly begins this History with the following words. 'The *Sodomites* 'waxing proud for their Riches and Wealth, 'grew contumelious towards Men, and impi-'ous towards God; so that they were whol-'ly unmindful of the Favours they received 'from him. They hated Strangers, and burnt 'in mutual Lust with one another. Hence we see that in the Prophets the proverbial Appellation of wicked Men is that of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. Thus *Isaiah* calls the People of *Jerusalem*, ch. 1. 10. *Hear the Word of the Lord, ye Princes*

ces of Sodom, *liſten to the Law of your God, ye People of* Gomorrah. See likewiſe *Ezekiel* 16. 46. & *Seqq.*

IV. And therefore the Divine Juſtice offended at theſe horrid Enormities, reſolved utterly to deſtroy ſome Cities ſituated in the fartheſt part of the Plain of *Jordan*, which *Moſes* relates to have been done in the following manner; ‘ *The Lord rained upon* Sodom *and* Gomorrah ‘ *Brimſtone and Fire from the Lord out of Hea-* ‘ *ven, and he overthrew thoſe Cities, and all the* ‘ *Plain, and all the Inhabitants of the Cities,* ‘ *and that which grew upon the ground,* Gen. 19. 24, 25. We have already ſhown, that this whole Tract of Land was full of Bitumen, which as it will eaſily take fire, was ſoon kindled by the Lightning; and the Flame was not only to be ſeen upon the Superficies of the Earth, which frequently happens in ſuch places, without the Deſtruction of the Inhabitants, but ſo pierced into the Subterranean Veins of Brimſtone and Bitumen, that that matter being deſtroyed, the whole Earth ſunk down, and afforded a Receptacle to the Waters flowing thither. All which Particulars we will now endeavour to handle more copiouſly, and to illuſtrate by other Examples.

Firſt, Though *Moſes* only mentions two Cities which God deſtroy'd by Lightning, namely *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, yet there were two more deſtroy'd at the ſame time, *Adma* and *Zeboim*, which lay near the two above-mentioned

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Cities, as appears from Chapter 14. 2. Nay, *Moses* himself affirms as much, *Deut.* 29. 23. where taking occasion to describe the Punishments with which God would visit the wicked *Israelites*, he tells them, that Strangers as they travelled that way should gaze upon their Lands, burnt up with Brimstone and Salt, in which there should be no sowing, nor should any thing grow, nor any Herb appear, as in the Destruction *of* Sodom, Gomorrah, Adma, *and* Zeboim, *which the Lord overthrew in his Anger and Wrath.* See likewise *Hosea* 11. 8. Now the reason why these two last Cities were omitted, seems to be, because perhaps the Kings of these places were tributary to those of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. *Strabo* indeed in his sixteenth Book does not mention that only four Cities were subverted by this Subterranean Fire, but thirteen; but perhaps he might be deceived in this matter, as well as he was in believing that the *Lacus Serbonis* was the same with the *Asphaltites*. Perhaps to, nine other smaller Towns, which depended upon these four, were destroyed at the same time. 'Tis certain, that *Ezekiel* does not only make mention of *Sodom* but its Daughters, *Chap.* 16. that is, the Cities that were situate in the same Province; *As I live, saith the Lord God to* Jerusalem, *thy Sister* Sodom, *and the Daughters thereof*, (that is to say, the Cities which it had built around it, or else sent Colonies into) *have not done as thou and thy Daughters have done.* It may not improbably be supposed,

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ſuppoſed, that *Strabo*, a Man of great Diligence, and infinite Reading, might have an account of the number of theſe Cities from ſome Writer of the *Phœnician* Hiſtory.

Secondly, God is ſaid to have rained down Fire and Brimſtone from the Lord, which is a Periphraſis for Lightning, as in *Pſalm* 9. ver. 6. He will rain Whirlwinds upon the Wicked, *Fire* and *Brimſtone*; and *Ezekiel* 38. 22. I will puniſh him with Peſtilence and Blood: a mighty Shower, Stones of Hail, *FIRE* and *BRIMSTONE, will I rain down upon him.* Now Thunder is therefore called *Fire* and *Brimſtone*, which is as much as to ſay, Brimſtone ſet on fire, and lighted. So in the third of *Geneſis*, v. 16. we find *Pain* and *Conception*, that is Pain which follows Conception. He that is deſirous to ſee more Examples of this nature, let him conſult *H. Grotius* upon *John* 3. 5. But the reaſon why Thunder is thus deſcribed, no one certainly can be ignorant of, that has either ſmelt thoſe places that have been ſtruck by Thunder, or has read what Learned Men have writ upon this occaſion. I will only give my ſelf the trouble to ſet down two or three Teſtimonies. Thunder and Lightning likewiſe, ſays *Pliny*, *lib.* 35. *c.* 15. have the Smell of Brimſtone, and the very Light or Flame of them is ſulphureous. And *Seneca*, in the ſecond Book of his Natural Queſtions, ch. 21. tells us, that all things that are ſtruck by Lightning, have a ſulphureous Smell. And indeed, our Natural Philoſophers have plainly demonſtra-

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ted, that the Thunderbolt is nothing elſe but a ſulphureous Exhalation. For this *Perſius*, in his ſecond Satire, calls it *Sulphus Sacrum*;

Ignoviſſe putas, quia cum tonet, ocyus ilex,
Sulphure diſcutitur ſacro, quam túq; domúſq;

On the other hand, becauſe the Thunderbolt is of a Sulphureous nature, the Greeks ſeem to have called Brimſtone in their Language, θεῖον; that is, *Divine*, by a proper name ἀπὸ τῦ θεοῦ εἶναι, becauſe it comes from God.

Now God is not barely ſaid to have rained down *Brimſtone and Fire*, but *Brimſtone and Fire from the Lord*; where the Addition of *from the Lord*, which at firſt ſight may appear to be ſuperfluous, does more particularly deſcribe the Thunder-bolt, which by the *Hebrews* and other Nations is frequently called the *Fire of God*, and *Fire from God*. Thus in the ſecond Book of *Kings*, c. 1. v. 12. *THE FIRE OF GOD came down from Heaven, and devoured him.* See likewiſe *Job* 1. v. 16. *Iſaiah* uſes the ſame Expreſſion, c. 66. v. 16. *He ſhall be puniſhed with the FIRE OF THE LORD.* After this manner the Latin Poets ſpeaks, herein intimating the *Græcians*; as *Ovid. Met. l.* 15.

Jamq; opus exegi, quod nec Jovis *ira, nec* Ignes,
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetuſtas.

Statius,

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Statius, in the first Book of his *Thebais*;

Ilicet Igne Jovis, *lapsisq; citatior astris,*
Tristibus exiluit ripis.

Because Men have no power over these kinds of Meteors, and 'tis impossible for them by any contrivance to ascend up to the Clouds, therefore God is supposed to dwell there, and to cast his Darts from thence: although he is equally present in all places, and does not send his Thunderbolts for any peculiar reason.

Thirdly, Though *Moses* does not inform us after what manner the Thunderbolts subverted these unhappy Cities, and the adjoining Territory, yet since he makes mention of them, we cannot comprehend how it happen'd any otherwise, than that the Thunderbolts falling in great plenty upon some Pits of Bitumen, the Veins of that combustible Matter took fire immediately, and as the Fire penetrated into the lowermost bowels of this bituminous Soil, these wicked Cities were subverted by a Tremor, and sinking down of the ground. We will not here enlarge how easily *Naphtha*, which is a sort of Liquid Bitumen, is set on fire. The Reader may at his leisure consult what *Strabo*, *l.* 16. *Plutarch* in the Life of *Alexander*, and *Pliny*, *l.* 2. *c.* 105. have said upon this Subject. Perhaps in some part of this delicious Plain which was overthrown, there was only the thick Bitumen, but even

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even the very Vapour of that Matter, which exhales from Grounds impregnated with it, is easily set on fire. *In* Lycia *the Hephæstian Mountains if you do but touch them with a lighted Torch, immediately take fire, so that the very Stones in the Rivers, and the Sands in the Water burn. If you take a Stick out of these Waters, and draw Furrows upon the ground with it, according to the common report, a track of Fire follows it.* These are *Pliny*'s words, *l.* 2. *c.* 106. There is a small Hill in the Province belonging to *Grenoble*, from whence a Smoke of a Bituminous Smell is perpetually seen to proceed: Now this Smoke by a lighted Flambeau, or Chaff, is soon set on fire, which we our selves knew to be true by Ocular Experience.

In that lamentable Earthquake, which in the Month of *January* 1693. shook all *Sicily* after so prodigious and miserable a manner, some Authors of very good credit have assured us, that Thunderbolts fell in several places of the Island. And this Observation is not unknown to the Ancients; for *Seneca*, *Quæst. Nat. l.* 2. *c.* 30. says, *Ætna* has sometimes burnt exceedingly, and thrown up a wonderful quantity of burning Sand, the day obscur'd by the Smoke and Ashes, so that the People were terrified at so unexpected a Scene of Darkness. At these times, as the common Tradition goes, there is a great deal of Thunder and Lightning.

And therefore the Bitumen which is so plentifully found in the Soil of *Sodom*, might be set

on

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on fire by a Thunderbolt; and since it flows, or is dug not from the Superficies of the Earth, but from Veins of a mighty depth, when once it had taken fire the Flame must of necessity run along all those Veins, and at last shake and subvert the ground. The same thing frequently happens to the Fields about *Ætna* and *Vesuvius*, for the very same reason. Innumerable Authors have written of the Soil of *Sicily*, but *Justin* shall serve for all, who in the beginning of the fourth Book thus describes it. The Earth is naturally thin and friable, and by reason of the several Caverns and Pipes, so penetrable, that the greatest part of it is exposed to the violence of the Winds. Nay, the Genius of the Soil is proper for generating and nourishing of Fire, because it is said to be crusted within with Sulphur and Bitumen, which is the reason, that when the Wind struggles with the Fire under ground, it frequently belches out sometimes Flames, sometimes Vapours, and sometimes Smoke, and that in several places. *Cornelius Severus* prosecutes this Argument at large in his Poem, intituled, *Ætna*. The same Observations have been made of the Grounds that lye about the *Vesuvius* in the Kingdom of *Naples*, and several Towns have frequently been there overthrown by Earthquakes. *Pliny* the Younger in the 16th Epistle, *l.* 6. where he relates the Death of his Learned Uncle, who was suffocated as he approached too near the fire of that Mountain. The Houses, says he, with frequent and prodigious Tremblings nodded,

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nodded, and as if they had been removed from their Foundation, seemed to move this way and that way. And *Seneca* in the sixth Book of his Natural Questions, *ch.* 1. has the following Passage. *We are told* that *Pompeii*, a famous City of *Campania*, was subverted by an Earthquake.—This Concussion happen'd on the * *Nones* of *February*, under the Consulate of *Regulus* and *Virginius*, and occasioned incredible losses in *Campania*; which though it was never free from these Motions, yet it seldom suffer'd by them.

* *Which is our fifth.*

That which *Seneca* tells us happen'd to the City of *Pompeii*, do we say was the very same Calamity which visited these Cities in the Plain of *Jordan*. Nor was this the first time that this Valley was shaken, as the Territory about *Pompeii* was not subverted the very first time it shook, as the *Jewish* Authors affirm, from whom St. *Jerom* has borrowed what follows in his *Hebrew* Traditions. *It is frequently asked*, says he, *why* Lot, *after he had first prefer'd* Segor *to his flight up the Mountain, that he desired it might escape because he design'd to live there, should so soon alter his Mind, and depart from* Segor *to the Mountain? We answer, that the Conjecture of the* Hebrews *concerning* Segor *is agreeable to the Truth*, viz. *that it was frequently overthrown by Earthquakes, and was first called* Bale, *and afterwards* Salissa; *and therefore* Lot *was afraid, and said to himself, If while the other Cities were standing, this was often subverted, how can it now expect*

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expect to escape in the common ruine? But to lay aside these uncertain Traditions, we will rather observe in the words of the *Roman* Philosopher, that God punished the *Sodomites* and their Neighbours, by a Calamity of a large extent, which has not only destroy'd single Houses, or Families, or Cities, but whole Nations, which sometimes buries all in Ruines, and sometimes in a *deep Gulf*, leaving no Remainders behind it. By which it may appear, that that which is not now, was formerly, but triumphs over the most magnificent Cities, and is not so merciful as to leave any footsteps of their ancient Glory.

Strabo in his first, and *Pliny* in his second Book, will furnish us with several Examples of this nature; some few of which, nearly resembling the Destruction of these Cities situate in the Plain of *Jordan*, we have here selected. The former Author tells us out of *Posidonius*, p. 40. that in *Phœnicia* a certain City, situate above *Sidon*, was absorpt by an Earthquake. Out of *Demetrius Scepsius*, that several Earthquakes have happen'd in *Asia Minor*, *by which whole Towns were devoured, and the Mountain* Sipylus *overthrown under the Reign of* Tantalas, *and Marishes turned into standing Lakes.* And this happen'd at the Destruction of the Vale of *Sodom*, where the *Lacus Asphaltites* was occasion'd by the Water which there overflowed. Nor indeed cou'd it otherwise happen, the Soil easily giving way in marshy places. As the same Author tells us, *p.* 37. Great as well as small things

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things may be ſwallowed up, ſince Chaſms in the Earth, and the burying of Towns and Habitations, as it happen'd at *Bara*, *Bezona*, and ſeveral other places, are ſaid to be cauſed by Earthquakes. *Pliny* in his ſecond Book, *ch.* 88. teſtifies, that the Mountain *Epopos*, a Fire on the ſudden breaking out of it, was levell'd to the Ground, and a Town buried in the Deep. For the Arch, that ſupported the Ground, breaking in, and the Matter underneath being wholly conſumed, the Soil above muſt of neceſſity ſink, and be ſwallowed up in theſe Caverns, if they are of a larger extent. For this reaſon 'twas ſuppos'd in *Seneca*'s time that the Mountain *Ætna* conſumed, and ſunk by degrees, becauſe the Sailors cou'd have diſcern'd it farther off in former times. See his 79th Epiſtle.

V. After this Territory adjoining to *Jordan* had thus ſunk in, it muſt unavoidably fall out, (as we ſaid before) that the Waters running to this place in ſo great an abundance muſt make a Lake of that place, which was marſhy before; as *Moſes* informs us, *Gen.* 14. 3. when he relates that the Forces of the Inhabitants near *Jordan* met *in the Valley of Siddim*, which is now, ſays he, *the Salt Sea*; by which name, as we ſhall hereafter obſerve, the *Lacus Aſphaltites* was called. And that this was not the only place, where a Lake was occaſioned by an Earthquake, we find from the above-mentioned Paſſage in *Strabo*. Nay, *Pliny* teſtifies that in one of the *Pythecuſæ* not only a Town was ſwallowed up in the

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the Deep, (as we have already obſerved) but that by another Concuſſion of the Earth a Pool broke out. In the beginning of 1693. all *Sicily* was miſerably ſhaken; and not only ſeveral Towns overturned, but the City *Auguſta*, which was built by the Emperor *Frederic* in the Year 1229. was wholly ſwallowed up by the Sea.

If to theſe Waters perpetually running into it, we add the Bitumen which at once broke out of the Earth, and mingled with the Water, we ſhall have a full Deſcription of the *Lacus Aſphaltites*. We have evidently ſhown, that all that Country abounded with Bitumen before; and perhaps what *Strabo* affirms to have happen'd at *Eubœa*, fell out here, which did not ceaſe to feel Shakings in one part or another, that the Earth open'd in the Field of *Lelantus*, and vomited forth a Flood of fiery Mud.

After this manner the *Lacus Aſphaltites* ſeems to be made, and nothing can be objected againſt it, unleſs it be that *Abraham* did not perceive the Earthquake, which we ſay happen'd in this place. For *Moſes* tells us, *Gen.* 19. 27. that he knew nothing of the matter, till he got up in the Morning, and went to the Mountains; from whence he ſaw the Smoke ariſe from the Earth, as from a Furnace. But beſides that, *Moſes* no where denies that *Abraham* was ſenſible of this Earthquake; it might very well be, that the Trembling was very inconſiderable, or none at all in the Neighbourhood. *Often ſmall Tracts of Ground are diſturbed*, as *Seneca* has obſerved, *Quæſt. Nat. l.* 6.

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l. 6. *c.* 25. *even this Earthquake which has filled the City with ſo many dreadful Stones, did not exceed the limits of* Campania. *Why ſhould I mention that when* Chalcis *trembled,* Thebes *ſtood unmoleſted; that when* Ægium *was every moment expecting to be buried in ruines, the City* Patræ, *which ſtands ſo near it, felt nothing of that Motion? That prodigious Concuſſion which overwhelm'd two Cities,* Buris *and* Helice, *ſtopt on this ſide of* Ægium? 'Tis therefore a plain caſe, that the Motion only goes ſo far, and no farther, as the Caverns and vacant ſpaces in the Earth, *give it leave.* According to the Depth or Breadth of the Caverns which fell in, the Motion muſt be heard farther or nearer. Now theſe Caverns ſeem neither to have been very far from the Superficies of the Earth, nor broader than the Valley which ſunk in, ſince four Cities, with the Territories belonging to them, were ſo ſoon ſwallowed up, and yet the Calamity ſpread no farther.

The Memory of this ſtrange Event was not only preſerv'd among the *Hebrews*, who afterward inhabited the neighbouring Country, but was propogated among the Heathens. *Strabo* indeed, *l.* 16. erroneouſly confounds this Lake with *Sirbonis*, but in the other part of his relation deſerves to be heard. It is a vaſt Lake, the Compaſs of which ſome Perſons eſtimate to be a thouſand Furlongs, the Length of it above two hundred, (*Joſephus de Bell. Jud l.* 4. *c.* 26. tells us it is 580 Furlongs in Length, and 150 in Breadth;) *the Water of it is extreamly deep and*

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and heavy, upon which account divers are of no use there; for whoever goes into it as high as his Navil, is immediately lifted up. It is full of Bitumen, which at uncertain Seasons boils up from the bottom, with Bubbels like hot Water, and then the Superficies of the Lake swells, and resembles the rising of a Hill. It emits vast quantities of smoaky Ashes, that deceive the Eye-sight; it immediately rusts Silver and Brass, and in short, every thing that looks bright and polished, except Gold alone. When their Utensils grow rusty, the Inhabitants know that an Eruption of Bitumen will soon happen, for which reason they go in flat-bottom'd Boats made of Reeds to gather it. Bitumen is a sort of Earth, which being melted by the Heat spreads mightily, but with a little cold Water is soon condensed again into a solid Body, and therefore needs Incision. — Several other Signs convince us that in the Soil of this Country there is actual Fire, for they shew us rough Rocks burnt up near *Mosais*, and Caverns wrought out in several places, the Earth full of Ashes, drops of Pitch distilling from the Rocks, the Rivers hot, and casting forth an unsavory Smell, and their Houses frequently thrown down; so that what the Natives of the place relate, may very well be credited, *viz.* that thirteen Cities were formerly inhabited in this Tract of Ground, the Metropolis of which, *Sodom* has still the compass of sixty Furlongs visibly remaining, that by Earthquakes, together with violent Eruptions of Fire, and hot bitumi-

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nous sulphurious Water, a great Lake was made, that the Stones took fire, that some of the Cities were swallowed up, and others abandoned by the Inhabitants that cou'd make their escapes. *Eratosthenes*, on the other hand, was of opinion, that the Country was overwhelm'd by store of subterranean Pools. We will now introduce *Tacitus* to confirm what has been delivered by *Strabo*, who tells us in the fifth Book of his History, *ch. 6. A Lake of a mighty compass, resembling a Sea, but of a more odious taste; and for the noisomness of the Smells that proceed from it, often fatal to the Inhabitants: It is neither agitated by the Wind, nor does it harbour any Fish, or Fowl accustomed to the Water. At certain seasons of the Year it throws up Bitumen, the use of gathering which, Experience has taught, as it has done other Arts.——— Not far from thence are Fields, which they report to have been extreamly fruitful in former times, and inhabited by large and populous Cities, but afterwards were set on fire by Thunder bolts, the Footsteps of which Calamity are still remaining; but that the Earth, which seems to be parch'd and burnt up, has wholly lost its fertility. For every thing, whether it grows Spontaniously, or is planted by Man, whether Herb or Flower, or arrived to full maturity, if compress'd, moulders away immediately into Ashes.* Therefore as I readily grant, that some famous Cities were here destroy'd by Lightning in times past, so I suppose, that the Earth is infected by Steams from the Lake, and

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and the circum-ambient Air corrupted, which putrifies the Fruits of the Earth. This Lake likewise has been described by *Diodorus Siculus*, *l.* 19. by *Pliny*, *l.* 5. *c.* 16. and by *Solinus*, *c.* 36. whom the Reader, if he thinks fit, may consult when he pleases. We will not here examine the particulars they relate, altho' we make no question, but that abundance of false Reports have been utter'd upon this Subject. We will only enquire into the Reasons of the several Names it goes by, with all convenient brevity.

Every one knows wherefore it received the name of *Asphaltites*, since it so plentifully abounds in *Asphaltus*, or *Bitumen*; and the reason, why it is frequently called the *Salt Sea* in Scripture, is, because the *Hebrews* call all Lakes, *Seas*; and because two other Lakes, *viz.* that of *Semechon* and *Genesareth* receive the River *Jordan*, in his passage above, both which are fresh Water, therefore this third, to be distinguished from them, was called the *Salt Sea*. Otherwise the Mediterranean Sea is likewise salt; altho' 'tis certain, there is some difference in the saltness. In succeeding times, it was called the *Dead Sea*, not because the Water of it is immoveable, as *Justin* pretends, *l.* 36. 3. but because, as *Josephus* informs us, it is ἄγονον, that is, it has no Fish in it. The above-mentioned Writers, that give a Description of this Lake, confirm the opinion of *Josephus*, to whom we will add two Eye-witnesses: First, *Pausa-*

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nias, who in his fifth Book expressly tells us, he saw the River *Jordan*, which runs thro' the Lake of *Tiberias*, *fall* into another Lake, called the *Dead Sea*, by whom it is *consumed*; and afterwards adds, *This Lake is void of Fish, who turn back to their accustomed Waters, as from a manifest Danger.* The Second is, St. *Jerome*, who upon the 47*th.* Chapter of *Ezekiel*: If *Jordan*, says he, *swelled by the Rains, carries any fishes into it, they immediately die, and float upon the surface of the fat Water.*

VI. So much concerning the Lake. Now let us proceed to say something of its Banks, and the circumjacent Country; besides what we have already related of it by the by. *Josephus*, speaking of the Territory about *Sodom*, thus expresses himself: Near this Lake, says he, is *Sodomitis*, formerly a delicious and fertile Land, and famous for the Riches of its Cities, but now wholly burnt up. After this he goes on in the following words; so that you'd rather think, that *Tacitus*, or any Pagan Author spoke, rather than *Josephus*. *The Reports run*, That for the wickedness of the Inhabitants it was destroy'd by Thunderbolts. Indeed the remainders of the Divine Fire, and the Resemblance of five Cities, are still to be seen; the sight of which, gives credit to the Stories that are told of the Country about *Sodom*. After the same manner, *Philo*, towards the end of his second Book, concerning the Life of *Moses*. *The* Monuments of that unspeakable Destruction,

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ction, are to this day shown in *Syria*; Ruines, Ashes, Brimstone, Smoak, and a slender small Flame still breaking forth, certain indications of Fire.

St. *Jude*, in the *7th.* verse of his Epistle, seems to have his Eye upon this, where he says, that *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the neighbouring Cities, are proposed as a Spectacle, bearing the punishment of everlasting Fire. This Fire, which for so many Ages was fed by the Bituminous Matter, and perhaps still continues, is called αἰωνιος. Thus *Pliny*, *l.* 2. *c.* 106. says, That the Mountain *Chimæra* in *Phaselis*, burns Night and Day with an *IMMORTAL* Flame; after *Ctesias*, who had used the word ἀθάνατος, of the same signification in *Greek*. *Diogenes Laertius*, *l.* 8. § 75. Thus speaks to *Empedocles*, who is reported to have thrown himself headlong into *Ætna*.

Πῆχυ ἀπὸ Κρητήρων ἔπιες ΑΘΑΝΑΤΩΝ

Thou hast drunk Fire out of immortal Cups.

Learned Men are mistaken, who imagine, that this fire which burnt down the Cities of this famous Valley, was therefore called αἰώνιος, because 'tis a Figure of Eternity; or because it was not extinguished till it had destroy'd every thing; for it flamed long after that, and both Interpretations are unnatural. Nor is that incomparable Man Dr. *Hammond*, happier in his

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Conjecture than the rest, who is of opinion, that the eternal Pains of Hell are here signified; as likewise in *Matth.* 18. 8. and several other places of Scripture. In the first place he tells us, that *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, are here put for the Inhabitants of those Cities. Secondly, he observes, that a present Punishment is meant here; since the Apostle says, πρόκειται δείγμα, they are proposed as a Spectacle, altho he had used the Præterperfect Tense before; from whence he concludes, that we are to understand this of the Damned in Hell, for as much as the other Fire was past and gone. However, the Monuments of that Punishment, as we have already taken notice, still continued; nor cou'd the *Sodomites* be said πρόκεισθαι δείγμα, to be proposed as a Spectacle, *qui δείκνυσθαι non poterant*, *i. e.* who cou'd not be shewn. Therefore our Interpretation is the most simple and agreeable to the Words; which being allowed, we may still say, that the Punishment of Cities destroy'd, are still left to be seen by us. *Brocardus* indeed, in his Description of the Holy Land, Part the first, *ch.* 7. § 25. The Dead Sea, says he, is always smoaking, and duskish like the mouth of Hell, as I have beheld it with my own eyes, by reason of the noisome Vapours that proceed from it. The Author of the Poem concerning *Sodom*, seems to have thought of the same thing, for he concludes all with these Verses.

Hæ

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Hæ Sodomum & Gomorham ſignata in ſecula pœna
Gentibus injuſtis, queis pectora dura timorem
Deſervere Dei, de Cœlo jura tuero
Inq; unum Dominum rerum ſpectare decebunt.

III

The adjoyning Country which eſcaped the waters of the *Lacus Aſphaltites*, was, as *Moſes* calls it, *Deut.* 19. 23. Brimſtone, Salt and Combuſtion; that is to ſay, burnt up with a ſulphureous Fire, and changed into a Salt, and conſequently a barren Soil. The Holy Writers, when they wou'd terrifie Sinners with the moſt horrible Puniſhments, are uſed to compare them with thoſe of the *Sodomites*; ſee *Iſaiah* 13. 19. and *c.* 34. 10. *Jeremiah* 20. 16. and *c.* 50. 40. *Lamentations* 4. 6. *Ezekiel* 16. 49. *Hoſea* 11. 8. *Amos* 4. 11. St. *Luke* 17. 29. St. *Peter* Ep. 2. *c.* 2. 6. They ſeem likewiſe to allude to this, or rather uſe Expreſſions borrowed from hence, when they deſcribe the Torments of the other World, under the repreſentation of eternal Fire, of Smoak aſcending for ever, of a Lake burning with Fire and Brimſtone; as *Revelations*, *c.* 14. *v.* 10, 11. *c.* 21. 8. Likewiſe the Heathen Poets, becauſe perhaps they looked upon theſe vulcano's or fiery Mountains, to be as it were the Chimnies of Hell, feigned, that there were Rivers of burning Brimſtone in the Regions below.

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VII. But to omit a farther disquisition of this matter, because it requires a larger Volume; we shall rather chuse to observe, That several circumstances of a Fable in *Ovid*'s *Metamorphoses*, *l.* 8. seem to derive their Original from this History; as, 1. *Jupiter* and *Mercury*, like the two Angels in this Story, put on human Shape, and travel among men. 2. They meet with very barbarous, inhospitable Men, just as among the *Sodomites*, they shewed no manner of respect to Strangers.

Jupiter huc specie mortali, cumq; parente
Venit Atlantiades positis caduciser alis,
Mille domos adiere, locum requiemq; petentes,
Mille domos clausere seræ.

3. *Tamen una recepit.* But one House at last received them; and so *Lot* gave a Lodging to the Angels, who must otherwise have passed the Night in the Streets. 4. At last *Jupiter* and *Mercury* confess themselves to be Gods, and threaten to punish the Neighbourhood. So do the two Angels,

Diiq; sumus, meritasq; dabit vicinia pœnas
Impia.

5. These Deities save *Baucis* and *Philemon*, as the Angels doe *Lot* and his Family.

Vobis

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——Vobis immunibus hujus
Esse mali dabitur——

6. *Baucis* and *Philemon* escape by leaving their House, and following the Gods to a Mountain, after the same manner as *Lot* and his Daughters.

——Modo vestras relinquite tecta
Ac nostras comitate gradus, & in ardua montis
Ite simul.

7. The Neighbours of *Baucis* and *Philemon* are punished, their Town turned into a Pool of standing Water, as the Valley of *Siddim* became a Lake.

——Tellus habitabilis olim
Nunc celebres mergis, fulicisq; paludibus undæ.

8. The Scene of this surprising Event, *Ovid* lays *ad phrygios colles*, in the Hills of *Phrygia*, but does not mark out the place more distinctly: Perhaps he had somewhere read, that it happened ἐν καπνιζομένῃ, by which name, part of *Phrygia* is called. Nay, the very name Φρυγία, is derived ἀπὸ τῦ Φρύγειν, from Roasting or Burning. Therefore the Country about *Sodom*, may as well be meant by both Apellations, as that Region in *Asia Minor*, as sufficiently appears by what has been already said; but *Ovid*, according

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according to the custom of Poets, puts down a better known name, instead of one that was less known. We might easily make a Parallel between that part of *Phrygia*, and the Country about *Sodom*, and shew wherein they agree, as any one will soon find out, who will attentively consider what *Strabo*, *l.* 13. has written, περὶ τῆς κατακεκαυμένης, but we have not time to discuss this matter more prolixly.

Altho' I am not of the opinion of some Learned Men, who suppose, that all the Fables of the *Grecians* are derived from Histories in the Bible, changed and corrupted: yet the concurrence of so many Circumstances, inclined me to believe, that the History of *Lot*, is in some manner shadowed in the Fable of *Baucis* and *Philemon*. We have shown in our Annotations upon *Gen. c.* 18. *v.* 1. That something like this, might have happen'd in the Fable of *Orion*; and indeed 'tis reasonable to imagine, that the *Phœnicians*, relating to the *Greeks*, things done in the Land of *Canaan*, partly mingled them with some Additions of their own; and partly might be misunderstood by the *Greeks* who had Vanity enough to adorn whatever they heard, with new fictions of their own Invention; which is the reason, that the footsteps of Truth can scarce be traced in their Fables; altho' they arose from true Histories. Consult our Observations upon *ch.* 9. 20.

From this Conflagration of *Sodom*, the Author of the small Poem, *De Sodomâ*, pretends the Fable of *Phaethon* arose. *Hinc*

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Hinc habet in falso de vero fabula famam
Solis progeniem currus optasse paternos,
Nec valuisse levem puerum frænare superbos
Ignis equos, arsisse orbem, tunc fulmine raptum
Aurigam.

But as there is no manner of likeness between this History and that Fable, save only, that single Circumstance of Burning, one cannot affirm any thing on this occasion. Others, with more probability, find some resembling footsteps of this History in the Fable of *Typhæus*, and therefore we will in a few words, lay down their Opinion, with the Arguments they bring to support it, 1. The name of Τυφωεὺς, may be deduced from the *Chaldee*, Radix, *Touph*, which signifies to overflow; and therefore will be the same as *Tipho*, *i. e.* one overflown; which name well enough fits the men that were drowned in the *Lacus Asphaltites*. 2. This same *Typhæus*, whether a Man, or a Monster, was an Enemy, both of Gods and Men, as the *Sodomites* and their Neighbours were. See *Homer*'s Hymn upon *Apollo*, and *Hesiod*'s *Theogonia*. 3. The beds of *Typhæus*, are said by *Homer*, *Il.* 2. to be ἐν Ἀεἰμοις, that is, in *Aramæa* or *Syria*: for which, consult the Interpreters upon *Steph. Byzant*, upon the word Ἀεἰμια. 4. *Lycophron* in his *Cassandra*, *p.* 137. *Ed. Steph.* places the seat of his Wife in a Lake, which seems to have a respect to the *Lacus Asphaltites*. 5. He

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5. He was slain by *Jupiter* with a Thunderbolt, which *Homer*, in the place above cited, and *Hesiod*, in his *Theogonia*, describe after such a manner, that they may seem to relate to the Conflagration of *Sodom*: consult the latter, from *v.* 840. to *v.* 867. 6. In the very place where *Typhæus* is said to be overcome, and killed by *Jupiter*, Fire and Smoak is reported to break forth, which (as we have already observed) agrees with the the Country about *Sodom*. 'Tis true, both the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets have added several things to this Fable, and not knowing where to place the Ἄεθμοι, mentioned by *Homer*, strangely disagree from one another, as to that particular especially, but agree in those Circumstances we have here taken notice of.

VIII. Since it is most probable, that these Cities of the Plain of *Jordan*, were overthrown in the same manner, as we have related it; However, some inquisitive Reader may be still inclined to ask, whether we suppose the Ground was burnt and subverted by Miracle, or only by the common methods of Nature. *Seneca* was of opinion, that the Gods never concerned themselves in any thing of this kind; and that the disorders of Heaven nor Earth, were occasioned by the anger of the Deities. Those things, says he, are produced by their own Causes; neither do they rage, because they are commanded so to do, but when they are disturbed, it proceeds from some failing or irregularity, as it happens with human Bodies; and

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and then, when they chiefly ſeem to give an injury, they receive one. But to us, who are ignorant of the true Cauſe, every thing appears frightful, and our apprehenſions are increaſed by the rarity of them. But to lay aſide Rhetorical Figures, which only amuſe and deceive ignorant People; the thing itſelf, if we conſider it diveſted of all Circumſtances, does not ſeem to exceed the ordinary power of Nature, as we have ſufficiently demonſtrated from ſeveral Inſtances of Earthquakes. In a Soil, impregnated with Bitumen, which is above, may be ſhaken and ſwallowed up with a ſudden *hiatus*. Thunder-bolts too may fall, and ſet the veins of Sulphur and Bitumen on fire, which afterwards breaking out, and mingled with the Water, may in a low Valley, eaſily cauſe a Lake full of *Aſphaltus*. But if theſe things were done before the natural Cauſes were in a diſpoſition to produce this Effect, and had not happened at that inſtant, unleſs it had been for ſome extraordinary Intervention of God, or his Angels; it ought to be no leſs reputed a Miracle, than if every particular in the Tranſaction, plainly ſurpaſſed the uſual order of Nature. And that the buſineſs happened after this manner, the two Angels diſpatched by God Almighty, upon this important occaſion, and their Diſcourſes are Arguments ſufficiently convincing. Nay, one of the Angels ſeems to have intimated this, who, before the thing happened, foretold it to *Abraham*, as we have obſerved

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observed in our Paraphrase of the 18. *ch.* of *Genesis*, and the 19. *ver.*

Dissertation X.

Concerning the Statue of Salt.

I. *The Original of the Opinion, that* Lot's *Wife was changed into a Pillar of Salt, came from the* Jews. II. *This Opinion cannot be made out from the words of* Moses. III. *The absurdity of it.* IV. *The Patrons of it are not to be relied on, since they can bring no Reasons to support it.* V. *A Solution of the Arguments, usually urged in behalf of the common Opinion.* VI. *That* Lot's *Wife either died of fear, or else was suffocated by some pestilential Vapour.* VII. *That the Fables of* Niobe *and* Medusa, *arose from such Expressions, as* Moses *useth in this place, which is confirm'd by the Example of the Fable of the* Harpies. VIII. *Whether* Hoc est corpus meum, *does not resemble the* Mosaical *Narration, as they have been already compar'd by some Persons.*

I. HAving described the burning of *Sodom*, and the neighbouring Towns, more accurately, than the common Interpreters are used to do; I think it not amiss, to examine the

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the celebrated *Metamorphosis* of *Lot*'s Wife; For, as we have demonstrated in the foregoing Dissertation, that those Cities situated near *Jordan*, were by an unusual divine Power, overwhelmed and buried in Ruins; so, on the other hand, we hope we shall be able to convince every unprejudiced Reader in this; that some persons, out of too fond a regard to Miracles, by misunderstanding the words of the Holy Scriptures, have improv'd an event, which we own to be somewhat uncommon, into a mighty Prodigy. The *Jews*, who were always a people so sottishly abandon'd to the belief of Miracles, that not being content with the Truth, they trumpt up a Thousand other Legends absurd, of which the Bible makes not the least mention, seem to have misled the Christians into this Error; and they, by following their blind Guides with too implicit a Resignation, imagin'd after the *Jews*, that *Lot*'s Wife was turn'd into a Pillar of Salt; tho' so wonderful a Change, cannot certainly be deduced from the words of *Moses*. *Josephus* relating this History, in the first Book of his *Jewish* Antiquities, *ch.* 12. ἡ δ' λώτου γύνη, says he, παρὰ τὸ ἀναχώρησιν, εἰς τὴν πόλιν συνεχῶς ἀναστρεφομένη, ἢ πολυπραγμονοῦσα τὰ περὶ αὐτὴν, ἀπηγορευμένου τοῦ Θεοῦ ταῦτα ποιεῖν, εἰς στήλην ἁλῶν μετέβαλεν· ἰσόρροπα δ' αὐτὴν, ἔτι γὰρ καὶ νῦν διαμένει. *But* Lot's *Wife in her flight, casting her eyes perpetually back upon the City, and being too much concern'd about it, tho' God had expressly forbid her*

to

to do ſo, was turn'd into a Pillar of Salt: I have beheld it my ſelf, and it continues to this Day. *Joſephus*'s Country-men are of the ſame Opinion, and particularly the Author of the *Jeruſalem Paraphraſe*, where we read, that *Lot*'s Wife, becauſe ſhe was a Native of *Sodom*, turn'd her head to ſee what became of her Father's Houſe, and *was made a Pillar of Salt, till the time of the Reſurrection.* The ſame account of the matter, is to be found in *Jonathan.*

II. Let us for a while, lay aſide their Authority, of which we ſhall treat hereafter; and examine *Moſes*'s words, which gave occaſion to this Opinion. *Lot's Wife*, ſays he, *who followed him, looked back, Vatthebi ntſib melahh*, and became a Pillar of Salt. Now here we find two words of a doubtful Signification, which being ill underſtood, were accidentally the cauſes of this Error. נציב and מלח.

The firſt of them in this place, may properly ſignifie two things, 1. *A heap*, ſuch for inſtance, as were erected to preſerve the Memory of any remarkable Accident, ſuch as *Laban* and *Jacob* rais'd in the Mountain *Galaad*, as we find in *Gen. ch.* 31. Such a heap is call'd *Mattſebah*, a word of near affinity to this, which ſignifies any thing that is rais'd up. For This reaſon, D. *Kimchi* ſeems to interpret it חר *thal*, and upon this conſideration, perhaps, or from the relation of thoſe perſons, who ſaid, they had ſeen it, *Sulpitius Severus*, ſuppoſes *Lot*'s Wife to be turned into a heap of Stones. They were

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were forbidden (these are his words) to look behind them, but the Woman not regarding this prohibition, as 'tis the infirmity of human Nature to long more earnestly after forbidden things, turned back her Eyes, and is reported to have been immediately changed into a Heap. 2. It may signifie a Statue or Pillar: The LXX. Interpreters have Translated it, στήλη ἁλὸς, a Pillar of Salt, St. *Jerome* a Statue, and *Onkelos* the same. From which Ambiguity of the Words it has happen'd, that some wou'd have *Lot's* Wife turn'd into a Pillar, without the resemblance of a feminine Shape, but others understand it to have been the Statue of a Woman, wherein all her Liniaments were plainly to be seen, as we shall observe hereafter.

But besides these proper Significations, the word נציב may in a figurative Sense, be applied to signifie something *immoveable* and *hard* like a Pillar, or Statue; whence the word נצבותא, *Nitsbeltha* in *Chaldee*, signifie Hardness, *Dan.* 2. 41. Nay the word נציב, signifies a *Garrison* or *Station* of Soldiers, because Centinels continue always in the same Post, see 1 *Sam.* 13. 3. Therefore this may be the meaning of *Moses*, that *Lot's* Wife grew stiff, and remain'd there motionless, like a Pillar or Statue; as we shall more fully prove anon. Thus in common Conversation we are use to compare stupid Men, that are gazing at any thing long in the same posture of Body, to Statues. *Philo* in his Book *de Profugis*, where he interprets this His-

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ſtory in an Allegorical manner, not Unelogantly, uſes the word στηλιτεύεσθαι, in a Metaphorical Senſe: He ſays, that thoſe who leave the things before them, and turn their necks, εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω, behind them, ἀψύχοις ἐκ Κωφῆς λίθοις παρόμοιον στηλιτεύεσθαι, become Pillars, like an inanimate and mute Stone. He has the ſame Expreſſion in his Book *de Somniis*, and ſays of a Man that neglects his Soul, and only minds his Body, ἄψυχον ἀναισθησίας στήλην περὶ ἑαυτὸν κατεργάσεται, he will ſtand like an inanimate Pillar which is conſumed of it ſelf.

The other word מלח *Melàhh*, beſides its common ſignification of *Salt* properly ſo called, has two other meanings in Scripture. Sometimes it ſignifies a ſalt and barren Soil, like that about the *Lacus Aſphaltites*, as we find in *Moſes*, *Deut.* 29. 23. All his Land ſhall be Brimſtone, Salt and Combuſtion, it ſhall not be ſown, nor yield Fruit, nor ſhall any Herb grow therein, as in the Deſtruction of *Sodom*, &c. In other places this ſort of Soil is called *Melhha*, as *Pſalm* 107. 34. and the LXX Interpreters render it by ἅλμυρις or ἅλμη; in which Senſe, if it is here underſtood, the Prepoſition ב (which is frequently left out, as *Gen.* 24. 23. *Pſal.* 2. 12.) is wanting, and then it will run thus, *And ſhe was a Statue*, or in other Hebrew words, *they ſtood* or *remained a Statue in a ſaltiſh Soil.* Sometimes it ſignifies a long ſpace of time, as in *Numb.* 17. 19. This ſhall be a Covenant of Salt, or an everlaſting Covenant

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to thee. We meet the same Expression, 2 *Chron.* 13. 5. Now Salt seems to be a symbol of Eternity, because things that are season'd with it, continue incorrupt for many Years; which perhaps is the reason why this word is used to signifie duration of time. And if this signification may be admitted, *Lot*'s Wife may be understood to have continued always in the Country of *Sodom*, or there to have been benumb'd, and never to have return'd back.

Thus we see there is nothing in *Moses*'s words which obliges us to suppose, that any unusual *Metamorphosis* happen'd in this case, in order to find out any meaning in them; and yet we ought not to have recourse to this sorry shift, unless after a diligent inquiry into the Signification of his Words, we were convinced they cou'd bear no other meaning: For since those Prodigies, which are above the power of Nature, very rarely happen, in comparison of those that may be effected by it; we ought seldom to admit of any Miracle in the Interpretation of Scripture, unless there be an urgent occasion for it.

III. When God is pleased to work any *Miracle*, that is, something which cannot be done according to the Rules of Nature, as they were at first establish'd; there is some important Reason, why the All-wise Governour of the Universe neglects the Laws of Nature, and makes use of his infinite Prerogative; because it is by no means consistent with his Wisdom, frequent-

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ly to break that Order for trivial Cauſes, which he at the Creation inſtituted with the higheſt Reaſon. Now if we carefully examine this wonderful *Metamorphoſis* of *Lot*'s Wife, we ſhall find nothing in this whole affair that ſeems to deſerve ſo great a Miracle. 'Twas enough that this undiſcreet Woman was puniſhed by Death for her Dilatorineſs; nor did the Angels threaten to inflict any thing beyond this, *ſave thy life*, ſaid he, *and don't look behind thee, nor tarry in the Plain, but fly to the Mountain, leaſt thou ſhould'ſt periſh.* Nor was there the leaſt neceſſity for a Miracle to deſtroy her, as we ſhall preſently demonſtrate.

Beſides, Who can digeſt this abſurd turning of her into Salt? where any thing of this nature is related in Scripture, there are evident convincing Reaſons, why ſuch and ſuch Miracles, and no other, ſhould be wrought. A Man of the meaneſt capacity knows why *Moſes*'s Rod was changed into a Serpent, and Water into Wine, at the Marriage in *Cana*. But here, if we were to reſign our Faith up blindly to the Interpreters, a ſtrange and ſudden Change is wrought for no reaſon at all; for I wou'd willingly be inform'd, why *Lot*'s Wife was rather turn'd into Salt, than into a Stone.

Some People pretend this was done, becauſe the Earth itſelf being converted into Salt, as *Moſes* informs us, *Deut.* 29. emitted a ſaline Vapour, which penerating the fleſh of the Woman, ſhe was immediately turn'd into Salt. But

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But those that have diligently examin'd the nature of Salt tell us, that this terrestrial Salt is *fixt*, as the Chymists express it; that is, does not spend itself in Vapours. Nevertheless, shou'd we grant what they so confidently affirm, yet a human Body, tho' it were never so much impregnated with those Vapours, wou'd not on the sudden be changed into Salt. Besides, tho' the Earth where *Lot*'s Wife perished, is said to be Salt, yet it abounds in a far greater quantity of Bitumen and Brimstone; so that if she were to be changed into some Matter of near affinity with that Earth, she might much more conveniently have been turn'd into a Fountain of Bitumen or Brimstone.

Others, in which number we find *Clem. Alexandrinus*, give us a mystical Reason why she was turn'd into Salt. *Lot's Wife*, says he, who of her own accord alone relapsed to the vices of the World, he left senseless, and made her as it were a Stone of Salt, and commanded her to go no farther: No insipid, or unprofitable Image, but to season and whet up those who have a Spritual Discernment, *Strom. lib.* 2. *p.* 387. We meet with the same strain of Reasoning in St. *Austin*, *de Civ. Dei. lib.* 16. *c.* 3. But any one may see how far fetched and Oratorical this sort of Argumentation is, it may serve well enough for the Pulpit, or a popular Harangue, but can never satisfie a Philosophical Ear, which is not to be imposed upon by such miserable Rhetorick.

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Aben Ezra is of opinion, that *Lot*'s Wife was burnt by Fire, which had some Salt mixt with it, so that she was as it were seasoned by that Salt; and he endeavours to prove that Salt fell down from Heaven with the Fire, which was likewise the sentiment of *H Grotius*, from *Deut.* 29. *v.* 22. But *Moses* speaks not a syllable of any Salt falling down from Heaven, neither can it be deduced from his words, as any considering Reader will soon discover, or might know from what has been already said. But how this burnt Soil came to be saltish, we shall shew in our Annotations upon that place of *Deuteronomy*. We may likewise add to what has been mention'd above, against those Gentlemen who maintain, that this Statue of Salt has lasted for so many thousand Years; that altho' it were made of Salt, which equall'd that which *is* fossil in hardness, yet being expos'd so long to the open Air, cou'd not have lasted so long. The hardest Marble cou'd scarce have suffer'd the force of the Air, of heat, and cold, and rain, and wind, without being considerably injured. They that pretend it was preserv'd by a Miracle, are so accustom'd to defend uncertain Miracles, by more uncertain ones, and are so seldom convinced by the most cogent Reasons in the World, that 'tis not worth the while to confute them.

Therefore since so many monstrous Absurdities stare us in the Face, if with the generality of Mankind, we admit of a *Metamorphosis* here, and *Moses*'s words will very well allow of another

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ther meaning, 'tis more preferable in my Opinion, to have recourse to that, especially if 'tis more agreeable to Reason. Nay, tho' the Words of the sacred Historian were wrested a little, which we have not done, as is sufficiently evident already, and will be made more plain hereafter. It were better to father a hard Interpretation upon them, than to introduce him speaking Absurdities. 'Tis certainly much more credible, that *Moses* used an improper Phrase, than that he deliver'd plain downright Incongruities, and therefore a forced Interpretation wou'd be infinitely more tolerable, than to feign a prodigious Event, meerly for the sake of expounding two poor doubtful words at best.

IV. But we are opposed, they say, by the Authority of the ancient *Jews* and *Christians*; some Citations out of whom we will produce, besides those we have already brought, least any one should suppose, that we purposely suppress or omitted them. The Author of the Book of *Wisdom*, *ch.* 10. 7. a perpetual Testimony of Wickedness, a smoaking Earth, and Plants bringing forth Fruit at unseasonable times; compare this with the *7th.* verse of St. *Jude*, mentioned in the former Dissertation, a Pillar of Salt, standing for a Monument of an unbelieving Mind. *Philo* likewise frequently takes notice of this *Metamorphosis*, as we gather from the two above-cited places out of him, to which we will add this third out of the *Allega-*

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ries of the Law, lib. 2. *p.* 77. Several Souls, tho' they are willing to repent, yet God does not permit them, but they are carried back as by a ſtrong Tide, like *Lot's* Wife, who for her love of *Sodom* was turned into a Stone. The ancienteſt Chriſtian who has mentioned this Charge, ſeems to be *Clemens* in his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*; his Wife, ſays he, went out along with him, but being of a different Opinion, and not perſiſting in concord, was therefore placed for a Sign, and continues a Statue of Salt to this very day. *Irenæus*, *l.* 4. *c.* 51. has the ſame and ſomething more, as we ſhall ſee below: 'Tis to no purpoſe to alledge the Teſtimonies of thoſe of a later ſtanding.

Now all that can be gathered from theſe Teſtimonies, is only this, that the *Jews* and ancient *Chriſtians* believed this *Metamorphoſis* of *Lot's* Wife, which we don't deny; but it does not therefore follow that we are obliged to believe them, becauſe indeed they borrow'd this Opinion from no where elſe but the words of *Moſes* miſunderſtood, and not from the ſight of this Statue, as we ſhall prove hereafter. Now as they might eaſily be miſtaken in interpreting the Words of *Moſes*, as they were in many other things beſides, ſo we are by no means engaged to take their Words in this affair. For all the Authors that 'tis poſſible to cite upon this occaſion, lived in thoſe times, wherein no certain Monuments were extant, from whence they might better diſcover the truth of this Affair,

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fair, than we at this great distance can do, besides the History of *Moses*: Nor were the seventy Interpreters, or those that follow them, so profoundly versed in the *Hebrew* Language, that 'twas not possible for 'em to mistake *Moses*'s meaning, as we have shown the contrary in several places of our Commentary: and as for the Moderns, their Authority is of much less weight, since 'tis a plain case, that they were furnished with no better helps to find out the Sense of the Scriptures than we are: And lastly, the numbers of those that are of a contrary Opinion to us, ought not to be brought as an Argument, because after the Septuagint had establish'd this Mistake in their Version, all the rest blindly follow'd them, without even examining the matter, *What one Man has said*, they are the words of a great Man, *All believe and no one questions it*; and therefore if we consider the business aright, only his Authority ought to be weighed in the Ballance who first advanced this Opinion, and if that proves upon Examination to be none of the best, as we hope we have sufficiently evinced, then there is no reason why we should rely upon it.

V. But perhaps some may be of Opinion, that we lose time in seeking to lessen the Authority of the Ancients, since we have not only their great Learning to encounter, but the Testimonies of several Eye-witnesses, as *Josephus* for instance, and some Moderns; by whose Authority rather then the Exposition of *Moses*'s words,

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words, this Opinion has found credit enough to last so many Ages. But we are in hopes to solve this Argument with as little Difficulty as we did the former, and if the Reader will be pleas'd carefully to consider what we say, we don't doubt but he will acknowledge as much.

The Testimonies of *Josephus*, and all the rest, may be confuted by one single Argument, which we shall first make use of, tho' we intend to examine the matter more diligently afterwards. All that pretend they have seen the Statue, that we may for once grant that they saw something, might be deceived by the Inhabitants of the place, who perhaps show'd them a Stone, or something like one, and then very positively affirm'd it was *Lot*'s Wife; for how cou'd they know whether they were told the Truth or no? Therefore they had behaved themselves more discreetly in my opinion, if they had written that they saw a Pillar, a Statue, or something like it, which the Inhabitants called *a Statue* of Salt, but that they cou'd not tell whether it was really so or no.

And indeed, such a Caution or Conduct was the more necessary in this Country, because the People of it were more guilty than any other Nations, of imposing old names upon new things, meerly to deceive the lovers of Antiquity. From Reading the Bible, and not from any Tradition of their Ancestors, they were us'd to guess where every thing of Importance was done, and so show'd to Strangers who came

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to visit these places, the Footsteps of ancient things, which they themselves had devised. And this is the Reason, that whenever they happen'd to misunderstand the Scripture, they blunder in the situation, and feign things that were never *in rerum naturâ*, as they do still to this very day. Those that have turn'd over the Writings of St. *Jerome*, and some Itineraries of the Holy Land, are no doubt on't, sensible how true this Allegation is. But to make the matter plain, beyond any possibility of denying it, we will produce a few Examples out of the vast number that offers itself. St. *Jerome* in his *Epitavium* * *Paulæ*, describing her Travels through *Judæa*, *In the Shore of* Sarepta, says he, *she entred into the little Tower of* Elias. Now can any Man of tolerable Sense believe, that the Cottage where the poor Widow of *Sarepta* entertained *Elias* formerly, should be standing so many Ages after? nor is there any more reason to believe, that at *Cæsarea*, *The House of* Cornelius *the Centurion*, *the little* * *Cells of* Philip, *and the Bed-chambers of the four Virgin Prophetesses*; and at *Emmaus*, *the House of* Cleophas, were still remaining; and yet all these things were shown to *Paula* with a world of Assurance. The same Lady not only saw the Sepulchre of Christ, but likewise *kissed the Stone of the Resurrection, which the Angel removed from the door of the Monument, and with her*

* *A Noble Matron of* Rome, *that went to visit* Palestine.

* *Ædicula.*

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her faithful Mouth licked the place where our Lord's Body lay. Afterwards she was shown *a Pillar, supporting the portico of a Church, stained with the Blood of our Saviour, to which he was said to be bound, and whipt; and the place where the Holy Ghost descended upon the Souls of a Hundred and twenty Believers.* Then she went forward to *Bethlehem*, and *on the right side of the way, stood near the Sepulchre of* Rachel; having entred into *Bethlehem*, she visited our Saviour's * Cave, and saw *the Holy Inn of the Virgin.* In another part of *Judea*, she entred into *the Cells of* Sarah, *seeing the place where* Isaac *was born* (who you must know pass'd all their Lives under Tents) *with the remainders of* Abraham's *Oak.* Then she went into the *Sepulchre of* Lazarus, *and beheld the Inn where* Mary *and* Martha *dwelt.* I will instance in no more, since these are sufficient to show what credit is to be given to those People, that show every thing with that wonderful exactness; perhaps some Persons, with whom Credulity and Faith pass for one and the same thing, will maintain, that all these things were truly shown to *Paula*, but we have all along profess'd, that we don't write to Gentlemen of so voracious a Belief, who will with as much obstinacy combat Truth and Reason, as they swallow foolish Stories with ease.

* *Specus.*

If we were to gather such sort of Stories out of the Modern Itineraries, it would require no great trouble to collect them, since they frequently

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quently fill both ſides of the Page in moſt of them. Let the Reader only conſult *Bellonius* and *Thevenot*, whoſe Obſervations we have often made uſe of, when they deſcribe the Holy Places, and if he is not as heartily weary of them, as ever he was of the moſt inſufferable talkative Coxcomb in the World, I will give him leave to apply my Writings to what uſe he pleaſes. I have already declared, that I don't write ἀλόγοις κώφοις, to unthinking Creatures, who will admit and reject whatever they think fit, without any Reaſon on their ſide. However, I cannot forbear to Tranſcribe one exceeding fooliſh Paſſage out of *Bellonius*, to ſhow how prettily theſe Holy Jugglers banter poor credulous Stangers out of the Bible: He tells us, *l.* 2. *c.* 8. that among other things that are to be ſeen without *Jeruſalem*, they ſhow in the City Wall, *a triangular Stone, which they ſay is the very ſame which the Scripture mentions*, Pſal. 118. v. 22. *viz.* the Builders refuſed; I humbly ſuppoſe there is no occaſion to ſhow how monſtrouſly abſurd this is.

Now to return to the Statue of Salt, we ſhould not think our ſelves guilty of ill Manners, ſhould we ſuſpect that *Joſephus* did not ſee ſo much as the leaſt reſemblance of a Statue, altho' we by no means deſpiſe that Writer, eſpecially when he comes to the latter part of the *Jewiſh* Hiſtory, yet we wou'd never engage in ſo unſteeonable a Province, as to quit from the Imputation of being ſometimes a Fable-monger. In the firſt

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Book of his Antiquities, *cb.* 2. he tells us, that *Adam* having foretold, that there wou'd be a Destruction of all things, one by Fire, and t'other by Water, the *Antediluvians* built two Pillars, one of Brick, and the other of Stone, and Engraved all their useful Inventions upon each of them, that if the Brick Pillar happen'd to be carried away by the Inundation, the Stone Pillar remaining, might preserve these Monuments for the use of Posterity. He tells us after all, that this Stone Pillar was still extant, *κατὰ γῆν τὴν Σιριάδα*, *in the Land of* Sirias; where this Land of *Sirias* lies ('tis to be supposed, not far from the Isle of *Pines*) we will not here enquire, but few, I am apt to think, will be able to prevail with themselves to believe that this *Antediluvian* Pillar was standing in *Josephus*'s time. But if this does not argue the Fabulousness of a Writer, and his Friends alledge for him, that he was imposed upon by the Relations of other Men, let us hear him describe the *Fluvius Sabbaticus*, or *Sabbath River*, *lib.* 7. *c.* 13. *de Bello Judaico*. He tells us, that *Titus*, as he Travell'd through *Syria*, saw a River worthy ones taking notice of, which runs between *Arcæ* and *Raphoneæ*, two Cities belonging to the Kingdom of *Agrippa*: When it runs, it has a very plentiful and quick Stream, but for the space of six days, as if the Fountains fail'd it above, 'tis altogether dry; on the seventh day it has a brisk Current again, and this order 'tis observed to keep. If *Josephus* saw the Statue of Salt no better

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better than he did *Titus*'s Sabbath-River, we need not use many words to disprove and invalidate his Testimony: See *Ludolphus* largely discussing this matter, with great variety of Learning, in his Commentary upon the *Æth. Hist. l.* 1. *c.* 8. *Num.* 68.

But 'tis pretended, that among the rest that visited these Places, and affirm the Pillar to be still standing, and are cited for that purpose, we find *Benjamin Tudelensis*, and the Lord knows who, one *Bernardus Solignacus*. As for the former, he no where tells us that he beheld this Statue, for these are his words, *From the Sea of* Sodom *to the Statue of Salt, which was* Lot's *Wife, 'tis two Leagues. The flocks of Cattle lick of it, but still it growes again as before.* 'Twas never my fortune to meet the last, but what follows will sufficiently show that he either told a Story of his own inventing, or was deceiv'd by others. *Doubdanus*, a Canon of St. *Denys*, who Printed an Account of the Holy Land at *Paris*, 1666. informs us, what the honester Men in those Countries think of the matter, *p.* 338. *Some will pretend*, says he, *that there is a great Stone of Salt to be seen, which they take for* Lot's *Wife*, &c. *but the modern People cannot be perswaded that it cou'd last so long.*

If we will but hear some of them who actually Survey'd these places, and were able to see nothing of the matter, but tell us what Stories they heard from other People, it will soon appear what credit is to be given to these Relations.

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ons. Thus therefore *Brocardus* in his Deſcription of the Holy Land, Part I. *ch.* 7. § 34. *Segar* is ſituated under the Mountain *Engaddi*, between which and the *Dead Sea*, is the Pillar of Salt, into which *Lot*'s Wife was turned. I gave my ſelf the fatigue of a very troubleſome Journey to behold this Statue, but was not ſo happy as to ſatisfie my Curioſity; for the Inhabitants aſſur'd me the place was inacceſſable, or that it could not be viſited without apparent danger of Death, by reaſon of the prodigious Beaſts and Serpents that abounded there, but eſpecially for the *Biduini* that dwell upon the place, a Savage and Inhumane *ſort of People*. We can eaſily ſuppoſe that he endeavoured in vain to ſee the Statue of Salt, but if there was any ſuch thing *in rerum naturâ*, it ought to have been looked after on the other ſide of the *Lacus Aſphaltites*, or beyond the Eaſtern Banks of it, where *Segor* or *Zoar* ſtood: 'Twill not be amiſs to prove the Truth of this Aſſertion in a few Words. 1. There is no room for us to doubt, but that thoſe Mountains to which *Lot* was commanded to fly, were the Mountains of *Moab*, becauſe he is afterwards ſaid to have erected the Kingdom of the *Moabites* there. Now every body knows, that thoſe Mountains ſtood *Eaſtwards* of the *Dead Sea*, and therefore *Zoar* where *Lot* reſted in his way thither, was on the other ſide of the Lake on the *Eaſtern* Bank of it; for 'tis not probable that *Lot*, who was making all the haſt he cou'd to the *Eaſt*, took his way

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way through the Country that ſtands *Weſtwards* of the Lake, and paſs'd over *Jordan.* 2. In *Deuteronomy* 34. 3. where the compaſs of the Land of *Canaan,* ſhown by God to *Moſes,* is deſcribed, after the Northern, Weſtern, and Southern Tracts are mentioned, it follows, the Plain of *Jericho* to *Zoar,* from whence we gather, that this City ſtood to the Eaſtwards, over againſt *Jericho.* 3. And therefore in after Ages it belonged to the *Moabites,* as appears from *Iſaiah* 15. 5. *Jeremy* the 48. 34. 4. For the ſame reaſon, *Joſephus de Bell. Jud. l.* 4. *c.* 27. places this City in *Arabia,* where he ſays that the *Lacus Aſphaltites* reaches μέχρι Ζοάρων τῆς Ἀραβίας, *as far as* Zoar, a City of *Arabia.* St. *Jerome* likewiſe in *Loc. Hebr.* places it beyond the *Dead Sea* over againſt *Jericho, The Salt Sea which is called the Dead, or the Sea of* Aſphaltus, i. e. *Bitumen lies between* Jericho *and* Zoar.

Therefore *Anſelm* the Minorite, whoſe words are cited by *Quareſmius,* in his *Elucidatio Terræ Sanctæ, Tom.* 2. *l.* 6. *c.* 14. was in the right when he ſaid as follows; *Segor* is ſituated in the *Eaſtern* Shore of this Sea, in part of *Arabia* where this Statue of Salt is, into which *Lot*'s Wife was turned; 'tis very dangerous to go to ſee it, by reaſon of the *Madianites* dwelling thereabouts, who ſpare *no body.* But what follows is extreamly abſurd, *This Sea,* as 'tis commonly reported, ſometimes ſwells to ſuch a vaſt Degree, that the whole Statue is covered with it, and is not to be ſeen; ſometimes it decreaſes ſo much, that

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the Breast and Knees of it may be seen. It stands in a pleasant place between *Segor* and the *Dead Sea*: How in the name of wonder, can this be a pleasant place, which is not only situate upon the Banks of the *Lacus Asphaltites*, but sometimes buried under the Waters of it?

Let us now hear *Quaresmius* himself, who was Præsident and Apostolical Commissary of the Holy Land, and Printed his *Elucidation* at *Antwerp*, *Whether*, says he, *this Statue is still extant I cannot determine, for I saw it not.* But some venerable old Men that came from those Parts assured me they had seen it, by the same Token, that a piece of it being taken from it one day, they found it restored the next, which *Tertullian* likewise observed, and so still continued. The *Biduini*, who carry Salt to *Jerusalem* from the *Mare Mortuum*, do likewise affirm that there is a small *Chappel there*. These courteous good old Gentlemen pretended they had seen what they had only read or heard of, for it was a venerable Report many Ages old, that this Statue was not diminished, and the reason of such a Report was this, that they might have something to stop the mouths of those incredulous People, who wou'd be saying, they cou'd not imagine how it should last for so many Ages. And least any one should object, that it might be a heap of Salt in that saltish Soil, such as are to be seen in other places, they pretended there were infallible Indications to prove it a Female Statue, supporting one Lie with another,

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ther, for fear the Story ſhould catch cold. The Author of the Poem concerning *Sodom*, which is added to *Tertullian*'s Works,

In fragilem mutata ſalem, ſtetit ipſa ſepulchrum
Ipſáq; imago ſibi, formam ſine corpore ſervans
Durat ad hoc etenim nudâ ſtatione ſub æthram,
Nec pluviis dilapſa ſitu, nec diruta ventis.
Quin etiam ſiquis mutilaverit advena formam
Protinus ex ſeſe ſuggeſtu vulnera complet
Dicitur & vivens alio ſub corpore ſexus
Munificos ſolito diſpungere ſanguine Menſes.

Neither was *Tertullian* the Inventor of this ſilly Fiction, for St. *Irenæus* had it before him, as appears by the following words, *lib.* 4. *l.* 51. *The Wife* remain'd in *Sodom*, not now a corruptible Fleſh, but an everlaſting Statue of Salt, and through her Privities, ſhowing her *Menſes* after the manner of Women; becauſe the Church, which is the Salt of the Earth, is left in the Confines of the Earth, ſuffering thoſe things that are Human, and tho' whole Members are often taken from it, yet it perſeveres a Statue of Salt, which is the Foundation of Faith, ſtrengthening and ſending the Sons to their Father. *This excellent* Man was impos'd upon by ſome monſtrous Story-teller, and perhaps too greedily ſwallowed what he heard, without throughly examining his witneſs's Reputation. It has been long ago obſerved by ſome Judicious Perſons, that Orators are allow'd to take ſome liberty in

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History, that they may be able to say something fine and *Elegant*. Now this manner of Death for *Lot*'s Wife, was capable of all the Beauties of Rhetorick and Strains of Tragedy; but the common Death as we have said is described by *Moses*, afforded little or no matter for Pomp and Ornament.

This seems to be the reason, why some of our Modern Writers of Travels have given an Account of what they never saw, not to take notice, that perhaps they were ashamed to say, they had not seen that, which others who had been in those Parts pretended to have seen, least the World should take them not to have made a true use of their Travels. *Christopher Furerus*, a Noble-man of *Germany*, whose Travels of *Palestine* and the neighbouring Countries, were Printed at *Nurimberg*, in the Year 1621. affirms, that he washed his Hands in the *Lacus Asphaltites*, and found that the taste of it was very nasty, and more saltish then ever he found; but he makes not the least mention of the Statue of Salt. *Bellonius* was in the Province of *Jericho* about *Jordan*, and describes all the Nations about it, *l.* 2. *c.* 86. but is silent as to this wonderful Statue; whether he had heard nothing concerning it, or was of opinion that the common Reports were false. You'll find *Thevenot* does the same, if you read *ch.* 41. *l.* 2. Part I. of his Travels into the East. Nay, *Nicholas Christopher Radzivil*, a Polish Prince, who Survey'd these Places with all the exactness imaginable, I inquired,

says

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says he, very carefully of our *Arabian*, and those that are well skill'd in our Country, who all of them affirm'd, that nothing like it was there to be found.

To return now to the more ancient Times, we might to these Witnesses add St. *Jerome*, who lived so many Years in *Palestine*, and took no little care to divulge things of this Nature, and yet he never makes the least mention of this Statue of Salt, altho' he takes notice of the Subversion of *Sodom*, of *Lot*, nay even of his Wife too. Those that are acquainted with his Character, and know what Pains he takes to show his own wit even upon the names of Places, and other Witticisms, tho' never so far fetched, are no doubt on't sensible, that he wou'd never have lost so Glorious an opportunity as this everlasting Statue afforded him to exercise his Talent upon; if any one had presumed to affirm, that so remarkable a Monument was extant in his Time. In his Epitaph of *Paula*, where he hunts after Mysteries from every place which she saw, or even beheld at a distance, he lost the best opportunity of showing his Wit, that he could have desired, if at that time this Famous Statue was to be seen. *As soon as the* Sun was up, says he, she stood upon the Brow of *Caphar Baracha*, that is the Town of Benediction, to which place *Abraham* followed the Lord; from whence she beheld a vast Solitude, and the Ground where formerly *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*, *Adma* and *Zeboim* stood. She view'd the Vine-

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yards of Balsam in *Engaddi* and *Segor*, *vitulam conternantem*, which was formerly called *Bale*, and was in the *Syrian* Dialect Translated into *Zoar*, that is, a little one. She remembred the Cave of *Lot* (and why not the Statue of Salt, if it was still remaining) and shedding Tears, admonished her Virgin Companions to abstain from Wine, the unlucky Parent of Luxury. If the Statue of *Lot*'s Wife had been then believed to be on the other side of the *Lacus Asphaltites*, how opportunely might he have introduced *Paula*, admonishing her Companions to eschew Earthly things, and not to look back. In his Epistle to *Rusticus*, tho' he makes mention of *Lot*'s Wife, yet he says no more of her than that disordered by Despair, and looking behind her, she was condemn'd to wear an everlasting Mark of her Infidelity. In his Commentary upon *Amos*, *c.* 4. 11. *Lot*, says he, was saved, tho' *Sodom* was destroyed, losing the part and substance of his Body, by which we understand *his Wife*; and yet this perpetual affecter of Allegories, says no more of her. All which Circumstances clearly show, that in St. *Jerome*'s time no body believed that this Statue of Salt was then Extant.

VI. And indeed we have no Arguments to prove she was turn'd into a Statue; 'tis far more probable, that the Woman either grew benum'd by fear, or else was suffocated by some Bituminous or Sulphureous Vapour. When she saw her native Country destroy'd by Fire from Hea-

ven

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ven and Earth, with a dreadful Noiſe, the Ground trembling under her Feet, and ſhe recollected in her mind the ſad Deſtiny that befel all her Friends and Relations, except her Husband and two Daughters; What wonder is it if Grief and Fear ſo poſſeſt her Spirits, that ſhe immediately expired, or at leaſt fainted away, and no one being by to aſſiſt her in that *deliquium*, died upon the ſpot. *Plutarch in Sympos*, *L.* 4. *Qu.* 2. affirms, that ſeveral Perſons have been killed meerly with the fright of Thunderbolts: *Add to this*, ſays he, the Conſternation and Fear, by which abundance of Men that ſuffered not the leaſt Injury have been carried off, only by their being too apprehenſive of Death. Great numbers have been kill'd by Thunder, who have not any Footſteps of being ſtruck or burnt, becauſe their Soul with meer fear has flown out of their Body like a Bird. Many, as *Euripides* ſays, have been deſtroyed by the very breath of Thunder, for at other times alſo the Hearing is eaſieſt affected of any of the Senſes, thoſe Diſturbances and Apprehenſions that proceed from Noiſe, giving always the moſt terrible Alarms to the *Soul*. Beſides it has been obſerv'd, that ſeveral have been ſtupified to that degree by an Earthquake, that they have run up and down like Perſons diſtracted and out of their wits; which ſad Accident, if it ſurprized this poor Woman, as her Husband was making the beſt of his way to eſcape, 'tis no Myſtery that ſhe was not able to ſave herſelf. *Seneca* tells us,

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that this frequently happen'd when *Campania* was shaken by an Earthquake, *Sen. Quæst. Nat. l. 6. c. 1.* and in the 38th. Chapter of the same Book he assigns the following Reasons for it, for if Fear, even when it is moderate and not so general, makes Men reel up and down as if they were actually mad; what wonder is it, that when the Terror is publick, when Cities fall, when the Earth trembles, when whole Multitudes are Buried in the Ruins, that our Minds, what between Fear and Grief should forsake us.

'Tis a hard matter not to be concern'd, when we see Thousands before us are so, and therefore the most resolute Dispositions were so disorder'd by Fear, that they knew not what they did: Nay Men of the best Courage are not exempted from Fear, and the wise Stoick was never yet to be found, who (as the same Philosopher expresses himself) cou'd without any manner of concern behold the dreadful and angry Face of Heaven when it Thunders, tho' the Firmament were dissolved, and darted its Fires to the Destruction of every thing, but especially itself. There is not, and never was such a Man in the World, that cou'd behold the Ground breaking under him, and be at the same time fearless and unconcern'd. And can any one therefore think it strange if we say, that *Lot*'s Wife, overcome by so Tragical a Spectacle, was benummed or fainted away, and consequently cou'd not save herself by flight?

If

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If any one shall Reply, that this manner of Death does not seem probable to them, perhaps 'tis no absurd Conjecture, that this Woman not only cast back her Eyes towards her native Country, but went back thither as soon as the Angels were gone, to behold the Burning of it nearer, and so was suffocated by some poisonous Vapour; as *Pliny* the Elder was, whom his Curiosity led too near the Mountain *Vesuvius*. And this seems to be implied in our Blessed Saviour's Words, *Luke* 17. 32. Where after he had said *Let no Man return back*, i. e. to *Jerusalem*, after he was once gone out of it, the Siege of it now drawing near, he immediately adds, *Remember* Lot's *Wife*, who returned back perhaps to see whether she cou'd save any of her Houshold Stuff. Nor do the Angels seem to have forbidden *Lot*'s Wife to look back, as if God Almighty would punish her with Death, only for casting her Eyes back, but that she might not loyter and tarry as those Persons are used to do, who often look behind them out of Love to the place which they leave, or are minded when a Town is destroying, to behold at a nearer Distance what becomes of it. And the following Words, *and stay not in all the Plain*, seem to have been added to oblige them to make the greater speed; the Angels therefore advis'd them to hasten, because as the Destruction encreased on all sides, they might be consumed with the rest, tho' they only tarried to look on, which frequently happens in such Earthquakes and Fire, as

as are fed and nouriſhed by the Nature of the Soil. *Cornelius Severus*, in his Poem of *Ætna* ſays,

Ardebant arvi ſegetes, & millia culta
Jugera cum domibus, ſylva, colleſq; virentes, &c.
Cunctantes vorat ignis, & undiq; terret avaros.

Namely, ſuch as tarried behind to carry off their Wealth, which perhaps *Lot*'s Wife endeavour'd to do, and becauſe ſhe was not removed from the place where ſhe fell, therefore ſhe is ſaid to be like a Statue of Salt in that ſalt Country. Nor is there any reaſon to urge the Emphaſis, ſince we find the ſame Expreſſion uſed about Matters of leſs Importance. In the firſt of *Samuel*, *c.* 25. *v.* 37. the Sacred Hiſtorian ſpeaks thus concerning *Nabal*, *And his heart was dead within him, and he was changed into a Stone*, that is, after his Wife *Abigale* had recounted to him the Danger he had eſcaped, by her making ſome Preſents to *David*, this fooliſh old Hunks, either out of Fear or Covetouſneſs, was ſo ſtupified, that he ſeem'd to be a Stone, and died within ten Days. But altho' *Nabal* is here ſaid to be made a Stone, yet no one will conclude from thence, that he was actually *Metamorphos'd* into a Stone: So in like manner we muſt not ſuppoſe *Lot*'s Wife was a Statue of Salt, for all ſhe is ſaid to become a Statue of Salt, or in Salt. The Latin Poets have uſed the like Expreſſions to ſignifie a mighty Amazement: Thus *Ovid* intro-

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introduces *Ariadne*, who had been abandon'd by *Theseus*, and left all alone in a solitary Island, expressing her Grief and Wonder,

Aut mare prospiciens in saxo frigida sedi,
Quamq; lapis sedes, tam LAPIS ipsa fui.

Metam. *l.* 5.

Mater ad auditos stupuit, ceu saxea, voces.

And *l.* 13. speaking of *Hecuba*, after she had seen *Polydorus*'s dead Body,

——Duroq; similima saxa
Torpet——

VII. In the most ancient Histories of the *Greeks*, which are called Μῦθοι, we find innumerable Stories or Fables, not corrupted so much for the sake of Lying, but because the Narrations of the ancient Inhabitants were not understood well enough, and because their Metaphorical Expressions were erroniously interpreted in the proper or literal Sense. We will here set down some few Examples of it, which we hope will not be unpleasant or disagreeable to the Reader.

They that first related the History of *Niobe*, who was destroy'd by Grief, *dirigiusq; males*; *i. e.* was rendred stupid, or senseless, by her Misfortunes, perhaps expressed it after such a manner

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ner as we find the Sacred Hiſtorian did in the Story of *Nabal*; which after Ages, not regarding the Meaning, ſo underſtood, as if *Niobe* had been really changed into a Statue of Stone. But Men of more acute Underſtandings were aware that ſomething elſe was formerly meant by it. *Niobe*, ſays *Tully*, in his *Tuſc.* 3. was for a reaſon ſuppoſed to be turned into a Stone; becauſe, as I imagine, ſhe was everlaſtingly ſilent in her Grief. *Palæphatus de incred. Hiſt. c.* 9. who ever believes a Man was made of a Stone, or a Stone made of a Man, is a Fool. But the Reality of the Truth is this: *Niobe*, after the Death of her Children, cauſed her own Statue to be made, and placed it upon their Sepulchre. We might here obſerve by the bye, that *Niobe*'s Misfortune is ſaid to have happened in *Phrygia*; which Country, as we have remark'd in the former Diſſertation, has a great Affinity with the Valley of *Sodom*, ſince both of them are κεκαυμένη, *i. e.* burnt. We might add too, that *Niobe*'s Children are reported to be buried by the Gods; which *Tzetzes* thus interprets, *Chil.* 4. *Carm.* 141.

Theſe Gods are Elements, which thus interr'd
Her wretched Children, Earthquakes, Thunder, Floods,
Perſwaded cruel Men to give them burial.

His Conjecture had been far better ſupported, if he had told us that they were ſwallowed up by an

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an Earthquake; at that time when *Sipylus*, where they lived, was overwhelmed in ruines, as we obſerved before, and that People in following times ſaid they were buried by the Gods, becauſe they were cover'd with Earth, without any humane Labour or Aſſiſtance. We might likewiſe take notice, that this Earthquake occaſion'd ſome Lakes near *Sipylus* to make this Misfortune of *Niobe* more like the Death of *Lot*'s Wife; but here we only regard thoſe figurative Expreſſions, from whence theſe Fables aroſe. We will only add, that both of 'em are joined together by *Clemens Alexandrinus* for the likeneſs of their Deſtruction, *in Admonit. ad Gentes*; p. 65. For have not all of you been chang'd into Men without Senſe, like ſome *Niobe*; or to ſpeak more myſtically, like the Wife of that Hebrew, whom the Ancients called *Lot*?

The Story of *Meduſa*, one of the Gorgons, ſeems to proceed from the ſame Original. The *Græcians* had been informed by the *Phœnicians*, that in the *Atlantic* Ocean, beyond a Mountain which is called θεῶν ὄχημα; *i. e.* the Vehicle of the Gods, an Iſland was diſcover'd, the Inhabitants of which were cover'd all over with Hair like Beaſts, and appear'd in ſo terrible a ſhape at firſt to thoſe that beheld them, that with Fear and Surprize, they were as it were changed into Stones; which in the *Phœnician* Language, wou'd be thus expreſs'd, *& viderunt, & facti ſunt in lapides*; and they ſaw, and were made

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made into ſtones. The *Greeks* ſo underſtood it, as if Men by only looking upon them were actually turned into real ſtones. Which is full as abſurd as if the words of *Job*, *c.* 41. 19. where he deſcribes the mighty ſtrength of a *Crocodile*, and ſays, that *the ſtones* of a Sling are by him turned into Stubble, ſhould be ſo wretchedly miſinterpreted, as if the ſacred Writer affirm'd, there was a certain Beaſt in the World indu'd with that wonderful Vertue, that it cou'd turn the ſtones that were thrown at him into ſtubble. The *Phœnicians* had added, that there were ſeveral Women in that Iſland; which they call'd Γοργάδες, becauſe perhaps they call'd the Iſland *Gorgab* in their own Language; which word, by an *Arabiſm*, ſignifies a *ſtony Ground*, as that Iſland was, whence the word *Gorgith*, *i. e.* a Woman of the Iſland *Gorgab*. The word *Garagon* likewiſe is uſed by the *Arabians*, when *Gorgon* is formed. The *Phœnicians* had affirm'd it in their Relations, that none of theſe Men cou'd be taken becauſe they fled towards the Mountains, and defended themſelves with ſtones; but that they had taken three Women, who, becauſe they aſſaulted their Leaders with tooth and nail, were kill'd by them, and their Skins carried to *Carthage*; from which place theſe Daughters of *Phorcy*'s were taken by the *Grecians*; one of whom having her Head, which was cover'd with Snakes, cut off by *Perſeus*, it was ſaid to have turn'd Men into ſtones with only looking upon it. That moſt Learned Man *Iſaac Voſſius*, diſcover'd

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discover'd part of this a pretty while ago, and shew'd that something of truth lurked under this Fable out of *Hanno* the General of the *Carthaginians*; who, as he tells us himself in his *Periplus*, had been as far as these places, and from thence brought the *Gorgon*'s Skin home to his own Country. We have more particularly explain'd it than he has done; however, 'tis a most certain Observation he made, that these Fables don't merely arise from nothing, as elsewhere it happens, but have truth for their foundation, as we find it verified in this instance.

Samuel Bochart has illustrated this Observation with an infinite number of Examples in his *Geographia sacra*, which every one almost is acquainted with, and therefore I will not give my self the trouble to transcribe them here. I will only give one of my own to make it more plainly appear, that the Stile of the Oriental Writers, who always affected bold and pompous Metaphors, is not to be expounded by our modern way of speaking, which is one of the greatest Faults the Interpreters of them have committed. When they wou'd find out the Meaning of any Word or Expression, they rather consider how they wou'd be understood if they spoke so now, than how those People who differ no less from us in Opinion and Fancy, than they are distant from us in relation to time or place, wou'd understand them.

The Fable of the *Harpyes* is well enough known, and we need not otherwise expound it than

than by comparing it with the truth. *First*, To begin with the name, Ἀκρίς is the very same with the *Hebrew* word *Arbeh*, which signifies a Locust. *Secondly*, One of them is call'd *Celæno*. Now in Syriac, *Solhams* is a kind of a Locust, and the Letters *M* and *N* are frequently changed, as appears by the words *Moph* and *Noph*, the name of the City *Memphis*, and several other Examples. Another of them, as we are inform'd by *Hyginus*, *Fab.* 14. was called *Achelöe*, which is certainly derived from *achal*, to eat or to devour, as *Salham* in *Chaldee*, from whence the name of the former is derived. Another's name was *Aello*, which word comes from the Phœnician *habol*, which signifies a Storm, (for which see *S. Bochart's Canaan*, *l.* 1. *c.* 33.) because the Winds commonly bring the Locusts. *Thirdly*, This is a reason why they are said to be the Daughters of a Tempestuous Wind. *Valerius Flaccus*, *l.* 4. speaking of *Celæno*, says;

Implorat clamore patrem Typhona nefando.

The Wind brought the Locusts into *Ægypt*, as we find in *Moses*, *Exod.* 10. 13. *Fourthly*, They were carried away by a contrary Wind, as appears by the 19th Verse of the same Chapter. So in the Poets *Zethes* and *Calais*, the winged Sons of *Boreas* drive them away from *Phineus*, that is, the Northern Winds. *Fifthly*, The *Harpyes* created a Famine in the Country of *Phineus* King of *Bithynia*. If

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If they leave any thing untouch'd behind them, as one complains in *Apollonius*, *l.* 2. The Locusts as they greedily devour every green thing, occasion a Famine or Dearth where ever they come. *Bochartus* has abundance of things upon this occasion, *Hieroz. part* 2. *l.* 4. in the six first Chapters. *Sixthly*, The *Harpyes* are reported to have left a most nasty Smell behind them, as *Phineus* tells us in *Appollonius*, in the following Verses; *viz.* v. 229.

'Tis the most noisom Smell,
No Mortal can endure it,
Even tho' his Heart was fenc'd with Iron a-
round it.

How patly this agrees with the Locusts, will sufficiently be demonstrated by these words of St. *Jerome* in his Commentary upon *Joel*, *ch.* 2. We have beheld in our times vast Armies of Locusts cover the Land of *Judæa*; which afterwards, through the Mercy of the Lord, were by a strong Gale of Wind carried into the Sea: — And when the Sea Shores were fill'd with prodigious heaps of these Locusts that were drowned in the water, the noisome *Putrefaction* and *Smell* of them was so hurtful, that it infected the very Air, and caused a Pestilence as well of Beasts, as Men. 'Tis said, the *Cossacks* sometimes have vast numbers of them, which after they are dead leave an abominable Stink

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behind them. *Seventhly*, The *Harpyes* destroy'd whatever they touched, as *Plineas* complains in the above-mentioned Verses, and so do the Locusts, as *S. Bochart* acquaints in his *Hieroz. p. 2. l. 4. c. 3. Eighthly*, The *Harpyes* when they came to devour *Phineus's* Meat, came with a mighty Swiftness and Noise, which *Apollonius* thus describes, *v.* 267.

But they like some strange sudden Tempest rises,
Or like the Lightning, darting thro' the Skies,
Broke from the Clouds with sad affrighting Cries.

Bochartus, in the fifth Chapter of the above-mentioned Book, will sufficiently inform us, what a horrid noise the Locusts make with their Teeth, and with their Flying. *Ninthly*, *Phineus* could not drive away the *Harpyes*.

These cursed Harpyes still my Tables haunt,
No way to stop their coming, or deceive them.
All rush together ——

Nor can the Violence of the Locusts be avoided, as we find in *Joel*, *ch.* 2. and the incomparable *Bochart* in his fourth Chapter, where he interprets the words of *Joel*. *Tenthly*, The *Harpyes* ravaged *Phineus's* House against his Will. They march through the City, says *Joel*, *ch.* 9. they climb the Houses, they creep in at the very Windows like a Thief. In that part of *Scythia*

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thia which the *Cossacks* now inhabit, there are such vast numbers of Locusts, that they get into their Houses and Beds, and leap upon their Tables and Meat, that the People can scarce sit down to Dinner without these troublesome Guests, as those that have travell'd through those Countries have testified in writing. See Monsieur *Thevenot*'s Collection of Travels. *Part* 1. in his Description of the *Cossacks*. *Eleventhly*, The *Harpyes* could not be wounded, as *Virgil* tells us.

Invadunt scissi & nova prælia tentant,
Obscœnas pelagi ferro fœdare volucres
Sed neq; vim plumis ullam, nec vulnera tergo,
Accipiunt ——

Joel says the same of the Locusts, *ch.* 2. 4. They rush through Darts, and are not wounded, and indeed this swift and sudden Plague cannot be beaten away by Arms. *Twelfthly*, *Appollonius* and *Valerius Flaccus* tells us, that by an unusual Anger of the Gods they were sent to *Phineus*; and that is the reason why the former calls them μεγάλοιο Διὸς Κύνες, the Dogs of great *Jupiter*; and by the latter they are stiled *deæ*, i. e. *Goddesses*.

Jam satis hac populisse Deis, cur tenditis ultrò,
In famulas sævire Jovis, fulmina quamquam,
Ægidaq; ille gerat, magnas sibi legit in iras.

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And so in *Joel*, *ch.*2.11. the Locusts are called the Army of the Lord.

This, as I imagine, sufficiently shows, that the figurative Expressions of the *Eastern* People, unless they are rightly understood, may occasion great Mistakes; and now, no one will admire that we have given another Interpretation of the *Statue of Salt*, than is commonly done, and which the words at the first sight seem to intimate.

VIII. From hence we may gather how *little* Foundation there is in this Expression, *and she was a Statue of Salt*; as likewise in the words of our Saviour, *This is my Body*; to infer a real Conversion of the Bread into the Body of Christ; which Passage some Learned Men in *France* have lately too greedily laid hold of to defend their monstrous Opinion. We shall not here prosecute the other Differences between this Expression and the Words of Christ, even though we acknowledged there was a real *Metamorphosis* of *Lot's* Wife; for we resolved to meddle with no Controversies here, but thought fit to expose the Weakness of this Argument, being thereunto led by this History.

Seeing therefore that matters are so as we have represented them, we think we may make bold to affirm, that the common Belief of the Pillar of Salt, wholly proceeded from misunderstanding the words of *Moses*, and has been obstinately maintain'd by the Vanity of some, and

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and the Credulity of others. Nor is there any reaſon, as we hope we have fully demonſtrated, to oppoſe the Conſent and Authority of the Ancients to our Opinion, which the moſt bigotted Patron of them will never pretend that they are to be received blindly, and without examination; or when they are proved upon a due ſearch to be ill-grounded, and contradictory to Reaſon, that they are to be preferr'd before a better. What then? Shall I follow the footſteps of the Ancients? I will indeed follow the beaten road, but if I can find out a nearer and plainer way; I will keep to that. They that writ before us, are our Guides, but not our Maſters. The truth lies open for all; it is not wholly poſſeſs'd as yet, but much of it is ſtill left for the Diſcovery of thoſe that come behind us. *Sen. Epiſt.* 33.

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Dissertation XI.

Concerning the Coming of Shiloh.

I. *The great Difficulty of this Place.* II. *That* David *is not meant by it.* III. *Both Jewish and Christian Interpreters are of Opinion, that something is here Promised, which is to cease at the coming of the Messias.* IV. *The Interpretation of some Jews Refuted.* V. *Some maintain, that nothing but the Dissolution of the Jewish Monarchy is meant in this Prediction. Reflections upon the Whole.*

I. THere is scarce any Place in the whole Bible, which has more employ'd the Jewish and Christian Interpreters, than this Passage in *Genesis*. 1. The three *Chaldee* Paraphrasts, *Onkelos*, *Jonathan*, and that of *Jerusalem*, with severall Rabbines of the same Opinion, whose Testimonies have been Collected by Learned Men, affirm, that the Remarkable Deliverer, whom by way of Excellence they call'd the *Messias*, was signified by the word *Shilo*. But a very celebrated Rabbine, *Aben Ezra* by name, opposes his Country-men, and maintains, that *David* of the Tribe of *Judah*, and afterwards King, was here meant. But altho' we own that the

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the Tribe of *Judah*, ever since *Jacob*'s time, enjoyed some Prerogative of honour above the rest; yet in the first place, neither *Scepter*, nor *Lawgiver*, belonged more to that, than any of the other Tribes, till *David* was advanced to the Throne: In the common Administration of Affairs, the other Tribes were never concluded by their Votes, nor had they any manner of dependence upon them, nay the Tribe of *Benjamin* had a King chosen out of their body before that of *Judah*. And therefore it cou'd never be said that *Judah* should have a Scepter and Lawgiver, till *David*'s Elevation to the Regal Dignity; for although it should be allow'd, yet in what sense cou'd it be said, that the Kingdom should remain with *Judah*, till the coming of him who fixt the Crown in that Tribe.

II. Some Jewish and Christian Interpreters are fully agreed, that something is here promised to the Tribe of *Judah*, or to the whole body of *Israel*, which was to cease at the coming of the *Messias*, or a short time after. Those that maintain the whole Republick of the *Hebrews* descended from *Jacob* to be meant here, don't consider that *Jacob* foretells their Destiny in this place, to each Tribe one after another; nor can they produce one single instance out of the Scriptures, where the whole People of *Israel* are call'd *Judah*, before the *Babylonian* Captivity. Neither can it be replied, that *Jacob* might very well give his Posterity this name,

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becauſe the Holy Ghoſt, who ſpoke out of his Mouth, knew that at the time when this Prophecy was to be fulfilled, the common name of all the Tribes ſhould be that of the * *Jews*; becauſe, as we obſerv'd juſt before, *Jacob* only ſays ſuch things as belonged to every Tribe in particular, and does not mingle their common lot together; and beſides, if the laſt words of this Prophecy are to be underſtood of the People of *Iſrael* in general, why ſhould not the former be ſo too? and that being once granted, how cou'd the Interpreters ſay that *Shilo* ought to be deſcended from *Judah*?

Therefore it neceſſarily follows, that ſomething peculiar is foretold to the Tribe of *Judah* in this place. The Ancients were of opinion, that the Adminiſtration of all Affairs in the *Jewiſh* Republick was in the Tribe of *Judah*, ever ſince the time when *Jacob* pronounced theſe words, to the coming of our Saviour. Now, 'tis certain, that neither before King *David*, nor after *Zedekiah*, any one of the Tribe of *Judah* had the Regal Authority, as all that are never ſo little converſant with ſacred Hiſtory will own. Therefore others acknowledge, that there was indeed no King of the Tribe of *Judah* before *David*, and after *Zedekiah*; but for all that

* After the *Babylonian* Captivity, the whole body of *Iſraelites* that were in *Paleſtine*, were called *jhudim* or *Jews*, becauſe the firſt that returned home were chiefly of the Tribe of *Iſraelites*. Afterwards this name was given to all the reſt, in whatſoever part of the World they reſided.

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maintain, it may truly be ſaid that the *Jewiſh* Republick ſhould not be utterly diſſolved before the coming of the *Meſſias*, becauſe out of that Tribe the Common-wealth recovered their ſtrength by degrees, and preſerv'd ſome ſort of Government in their hands, even till the days of Chriſt. But *Jacob* does not promiſe, that the Scepter ſhould continue with *Judah*, and not be wholly taken from him, till the *Meſſias* ſhould come, but that *it ſhould not depart from* him; which Expreſſion plainly denotes, the perpetual Continuation of a Kingdom, interrupted by no Calamities.

III. Some *Jews* are of opinion, that 'tis here prophecy'd of *Judah*, that the *Rod* wherewith he is to be beaten, ſhall not depart from him; but that ſtill one or other ſhall command, and impoſe Laws upon him, till the coming of the *Meſſias*. But beſides, that the particular words, which compoſe this Prediction, will by no means admit of this Interpretation, it is apparently falſe, whither we underſtand the Tribe of *Judah*, or the whole People of *Iſrael*, as it may eaſily be proved by the Hiſtory of the Old Teſtament, and particularly the Reigns of *David* and *Solomon*.

We will not purſue this Argument any farther, which wou'd furniſh matter enough for a large Volume, if it were to be examined with all that Nicety it deſerves. But the Reader may conſult for his farther Satisfaction *Huetius's Demonſtratio Evangelica, Prop.* 9. *Cap.* 4. where

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where he has set down all the different Opinions with incredible Pains and Accuracy. To him may be added the *Pugio Fidei*, *p.* 2. *cap.* 4. with the Learned Observations of *Jos. de Voisin*, where the several Testimonies of the Rabbines chiefly are collected. We shall only subjoin another Interpretation of this Prophecy, which they have not taken notice of; and some People perhaps upon a due examination will find it to be more agreeable not only to the Grammatical Sense of the words, but also to the Events here predicted.

IV. Some Persons therefore believe, that *Jacob* promised nothing more to *Judah* in this place, but that when the Regal Dignity had once honour'd his Tribe, it should be translated to no other, but continue there till it was wholly extinguished. The Maintainers of this Opinion interpret *Shiloh* to be the *End* or Cessation of it, to wit, of the Scepter and Royal Power. Now if this were the true Interpretation of the word, there is nothing in *Jacob*'s Prediction which wou'd occasion the least difficulty: for it appears by the sacred History, that from the time that *David* sate upon the Throne of *Israel*, the Kings descended from him govern'd the Tribe of *Judah* without the Intervention of any other Family, till the Kingdom of *Judah* was wholly dissolv'd. Whereas in the Kingdom of the ten Tribes, even before it was utterly destroy'd by *Salmanassar*, the Regal Dignity did not stand in one, but several Tribes,

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Tribes, according to the different Descent of their Kings. The chief Objection that can be rais'd against this Interpretation will be, that it disarms the Christians of an Oracle, own'd by the *Jews* themselves, whereby they have successfully prov'd against the latter, that the *Messias* was already come. But an Interpreter must not always consider what the *Jews* will give him leave to say, or what wou'd be serviceable to his Cause, if it were true, but what is really consonant to the Truth it self, no less than if there were no such People as the *Jews* now in the World, or if we had never had the least Dispute with them about the coming of the *Messias*. Though the *Jews* were not mistaken in their Expectation of the *Messias*, yet all those places in the Old Testament, which out of their former immoderate, and now their preposterous Desire of his coming, they have expounded concerning him, must not therefore be affirmed to relate to him, merely because the *Jews* think so. That the Rabbins have forced several Passages in the Bible to favour the *Messias*, without any reason on their side, is sufficiently known to those that have either read them, or what the Christians have collected out of their Writings. Therefore as it was a true Tradition of the ancient Jews, that there should come at last a Deliverer to *Israel*, so any unprejudiced Person will own that they might sometimes commit Mistakes in expounding some Text of the O. Testament, which they supposed to relate to him.

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V. This we don't ſay with that proſpect, as if we had the Vanity to imagine that this laſt Interpretation of *Jacob*'s Prophecy ought to take place of all other, whether already found out, or hereafter to be diſcover'd, as being the unqueſtionable meaning of this Paſſage: but that after the Merits of all the other Opinions have been impartially conſidered, it will more plainly appear either on which ſide the Truth ſtands, or where and by what Methods it is to be acquir'd, or laſtly why it cannot be found out?

Diſſertation XII.

In which ſeveral Obſcure Texts in Geneſis *are explained and illuſtrated.*

AND God ſaid let there, ch. 1. 3.] The Hebrews commonly deſcribe God working all things by his Word, to denote his tranſcendent Power over the whole Creation, and with what eaſe he does whatever he pleaſes. Thus the Pſalmiſt, *Pſalm* 33. 6. *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Hoſt of them by the Breath of his Mouth*: Pſalm 148. 5. *He commanded, and they were created.* And as he creates by his Commands, ſo he deſtroys after the ſame manner. *He ſhall ſmite the Earth*, ſays *Iſaiah*, c. 11. 4. *with the Rod of his Mouth*,

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Mouth, and with the Breath of his Lips he ſhall ſlay the Wicked. If there is any Sublimity in theſe Expreſſions, as we own there is, it is to be aſcribed to the Genius of the Hebrew Language, and not to the Eloquence of *Moſes*, as *Longinus*, περὶ ὕψ. imagined: for otherwiſe *Moſes* rather uſes an humble ſtile in his Hiſtorical Narrations, as *Huetius* has obſerved, *Prop.* 4. *c.* 2. *Dem. Evang.*

And the Earth brought forth Graſs, ch. 1. 12.] This Verſe is a meer Repetition of the former, which after *Moſes* had ſaid *and it was ſo*, was altogether unneceſſary. But the Hebrew Writers are far from that Severity of the Atticks, who could not endure any Superfluities. Several things are redundant in the ſacred Volumes, and others defective, which wou'd not a little contribute to the Perſpicuity of the Sentence. However, this is not ſo much to be attributed to their Writers, as to the Condition of their Language, which the moſt partial Patron of it muſt acknowledge to be unpoliſhed and uncultivated, though it ſometimes affects, as has been obſerved in the preceding Praragraph, according to the Genius of the other Oriental Languages, a pompous and magnificent way of Expreſſion.

God bleſſed the ſeventh day and ſanctified it, ch. 2. 3.] As one contrary is beſt illuſtrated by another, it will not be *mal à propos* to enquire what is the meaning of *Maledicere diis*, *i. e.* to curſe a day; that ſo we may under-

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underſtand what it is, *benedicere dici*, or to bleſs a day. Among the Hebrews that was ſaid to be a *maledictus dies*, or a curſed day, which the Greeks called ἀποφράς, and the Romans *exſecrabiles*, or unauſpicious, by reaſon of ſome remarkable Deſtruction or Calamity which had happen'd on that day. Thus, *Jeremiah* 20.14. the Prophet to denote how wretched a Life he lived, *Curſed be the day*, ſays he, *wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my Mother bore me be bleſſed:* That is, let that day be reckoned ominous in all future Ages, for the Birth of an unfortunate Child. The Roman Senate out of a ſervile Compliment to *Nero*, decreed that *Agrippina*'s Birth-day ſhould be reckon'd among the *dies nefaſti*, as we find in *Tacitus*, *Ann.* 14. 12. Which Cuſtom the Romans borrowed from the Græcians, and they from the Oriental People. Now on ſuch a day they were forbidden to ſhow any publick mirth, or rejoycing in memory of the unlucky Accident whatever it was, that happen'd on it. Hence *Job* curſing the day of his Nativity, wiſhes, *ch.* 3. 7. *that no joy be in it.* And therefore to *curſe a day*, is all one as to pray that it may become execrable and ominous, and that all Demonſtrations of Gladneſs may be intermitted upon it; to *bleſs a day* is to wiſh that it may be eſteemed fortunate, and celebrated with publick Rejoycings, and a *bleſſed day* is the ſame with a happy, or a feſtival day. From theſe Premiſes it follows, that when God is ſaid to have bleſſed the ſeventh day,

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day, we are to understand by that passage, *Deum voluisse eum diem festum haberi, & hilaritèr transigi.* However, we are not to infer from this place, that Mankind ever since the Creation of *Adam*, observ'd this day as a Festival, because *Moses* when he relates the History of the earliest times, frequently takes occasion to remind the Israelites of the Original of some Rites which he instituted; and does not speak as *Adam*, or those that were before him would have done if they had transmitted their own Actions in writing, but suits himself to the Language and Genius of his own times. See *chap.* 7:2.

To see what he would call them, v. 2. 19.] Here the famous Axiom of the Rabbines takes place, *Loquitur lex ut filij hominum*, for God did not want the help of *Adam* to give names to the Beasts. Perhaps this was not done in the compass of one day, if as some believe, *Adam* viewed all the several sorts of Animals, neither is it credible that all the Creatures in the Universe, both wild and tame, and all the Fishes, were brought before *Adam* to receive their names. In all appearance those Beasts and Fowls that are peculiar to *America*, never came upon this Errand, neither will any one I believe, presume that the Fishes quitted their Element for this purpose. We have already observed in our Dissertation upon the Flood, that the word *all* is frequently applied to signify some certain kinds, but not *omnia genera*, and there-

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therefore we may ſuppoſe that with *Eve*'s Conſent *Adam* beſtowed particular names upon ſome of the tamer and moſt common Animals in *Syria*. For what occaſion had *Adam* for Speech and Names of things, ſo long as he was alone? Therefore the order to be neglected here, as it frequently is; ſee *ch.* 1. v. 5, 8, 10.

Now becauſe this is related in a few words, we muſt not therefore conclude, that it was tranſacted in a few hours, and therefore we lie under no neceſſity to affirm with ſome Interpreters, that by a miraculous and extraordinary Effect of the Divine Power all ſorts of living Creatures came in troops to *Adam* to have names beſtowed upon them. 'Tis more agreeable to reaſon to believe that words were invented by degrees, and that theſe Animals received their names as our firſt Parents happen'd to behold them, or to talk of them.

And whatſoever Adam *called every living Creature, that was the name thereof*, ibid.] The Rabbines pretend that theſe names were given them in the Hebrew Tongue; but how precariouſly this is affirmed, we have plainly ſhown in our Diſſertation about the Hebrew Tongue. Perhaps *Moſes* deſigned to hint in this place that the Invention of a Language, which is of ſuch abſolute neceſſity to all the affairs of humane Life, was one of the firſt cares of our firſt Parents: or perhaps the Sovereignty of Man over the Beaſts, is intimated by this beſtowing of names upon them. Whence among

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among the Eastern People those that had new Masters, had new names given them by them, as *Joseph* from *Pharaoh*, *Gen.* 41. 45. *Eliakim* King of *Judah* from *Pharoah Necha*, 2 *Chron. c.* 36. 4. And *Daniel* and his Companions, by *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 1. 7. The Rabbines likewise, and some of the Interpreters, pretend that *Adam* bestow'd these names with great Sagacity and Wisdom; from whence they conclude, that he was acquainted with their different natures, as *Bochart* endeavours to show, *Hieroz. part* 1. *lib.* 1. *cap.* 9. But that Learned Man takes it for granted all along, that *Adam* spoke Hebrew, such as we find it in the holy Volumes, which as we have already observed, is doubtful. Besides, those names are sometimes taken from something remarkable obvious in the Animals, which any one might have discovered at first sight. In short, most of the Reasons of the Hebrew names are supported by very slight Conjectures, and are by no means to be obtruded as certainly true, upon such as are well skilled in these matters: not to repeat what we said before, that but few of the Animals had names immediately given them, but only as our first Parents took notice of them, or knew them by frequent Experiments.

And he took one of his ribs, c. 2. 21.] From this, or some such sort of a Narration among the Orientals, *Plato* in *Eusebius*'s Opinion, *Præp. Evang. l.* 12. *c.* 12. seems to have taken what he

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writes concerning the nature of the firſt Man, in his *Sympoſian*, where he ſuppoſes that he was at firſt ἀνδρόγυνος, both Man and Woman growing together, and that this Animal afterwards was divided into two parts, one of which became a Man, and the other a Woman. The ancient Rabbines reading this Paſſage in *Plato*, as they were always fond of Monſters and Prodigies; they ſoon liked it, and endeavoured to countenance this ſtrange Opinion by ſome places of Scripture abſurdly applied, as particularly c. 12. *Male and Female he created them.* Now that this Doctrine was firſt borrowed from *Plato*, and afterwards cruſted over with the Authority of the Bible to recommend it the better, we ſhall be ſoon convinced if we conſider that the Rabbines had ſeveral other Opinions of the ſame nature, which they took originally out of this Philoſopher, and then publiſhed them as if they had taken them out of the Scriptures, as the notion of the Tranſmigration of Souls, and the like. Therefore we have no reaſon to wonder, as the Learned *Grotius* does, that the Rabbinical Expoſitions agree ſo well with *Plato*'s Doctrine. Thus we ſee the Chriſtian Interpreters frequently expound the Scripture, ſo as to make it ſupport the Hypotheſis of the ancient or modern Philoſophers.

And were not aſhamed, c. 2. 25.] We uſe to bluſh when we are diſcovered committing ſomething which is in its own nature evil, and conſequently

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sequently unlawful; or when we do something which is indeed lawful, but not in such a manner or at such a time. Neither of which cou'd be said to be here, for neither is it immoral to go without Cloaths, neither if it is unlawful to do so before others, is it unlawful before ones Wife alone. 'Tis therefore somewhat strange how our first Parents should afterwards be ashamed of the Nakedness, when there were no more in the World but themselves.

Cain *brought of the fruit of the ground an offering*, ch. 4. 3.] *Grotius* thinks this was done by no positive Command of God, but merely by the Dictates of nature, which suggested to him, that as a conspicuous Respect was to be paid to his Maker, so he was obliged to shew it by offering those things to him which are most esteemed by Men. Several ancient Christians and Jews were of the same Opinion, as *Outram* in his Treatise *De Sacrificijs*, *l.* 1. *c.* 1. has shown. But others assign the Original of Sacrifices to an express Command of God; which I am the easier inclined to believe, because that in the beginning of the World, after our first Parents were guilty of so notorious a Defection, Mankind in all probability was too rude and ignorant to find out of themselves, that the Beneficence and Power of God was to be acknowledged by these external Ceremonies. God who, ἔνεμεν ἀυτὲς ἀυτὸς ἐπιςατῶν, *fed*

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them, and was their Governor, as *Plato* ſpeaks of the Men of the Golden Age, ſeems to have taught them theſe Rites, leaſt in proceſs of time they ſhould forget their Creator.

Of the firſtlings of the flock, and the fat thereof, ch. 4. 4.] Since eating of Fleſh ſeems to have been unknown before the Flood, therefore *Grotius* ſuppoſes that no Victims were ſacrificed, becauſe *nihil deo ſacrari ſolet, niſi quod in uſu ſit hominum.* As this reaſon is by no means to be rejected, ſo he omits another of no leſs importance, which is brought from the Scarcity of Creatures. In the beginning there were but ſmall numbers of Oxen, Sheep and Goats, and therefore it is ſcarce credible that the munificent Lord of the Univerſe wou'd have them leſſened merely for his own honour, ſince it wou'd be ſo prejudicial to Mankind. For the ſame reaſon *Triptolemus* enacted a Law, Ζῶα μὴ σφάζειν, *that no Animals ſhould be hurt*; θεοὺς καρποῖς ἀγαλλειν, *to worſhip the Gods with the fruits of the Earth.* Long after him *Draco* commanded the ſame, for which conſult *Porphyrius de Abſtinentia, l.* 4. *Varro de R. R. l.* 2. *c.* 4. ſpeaking of the Oxe; *hic ſocius hominum in ruſtico opere, & cereres Miniſter. Ab hoc Antiqui manus ita abſtineri voluerunt, ut capite ſanxerint, ſiquis occidiſſet. Quâ in te teſtis Attice, teſtis Attice, teſtis Peloponneſes.*

To

To come now to *Abel*'s Oblation, since the Hebrew *hhalab* signifies *Milk* as well as *Fat*; I should chuse to render it by the former, and believe that by a common ἓν διὰ δυοῖν, with the Hebrews, Abel *brought of the firstlings of his Flock, and of the Milk thereof*, is put instead of, Abel *brought of the Milk of the firstlings of his flock.* 'Tis credible that God wou'd have them signify by this Rite that the increase of all Creatures was owing to him: And perhaps for the same reason the Ægyptians offer'd Milk to their Deities, See *Diod. Bibl. lib.* 1.

A Fugitive, and a Vagabond shalt thou be, ch. 4. 12.] It may not be amiss here to observe that amongst the Græcians and other People, in the earliest times of Antiquity, Murder was punished with Banishment. Thus *Medon* the Brother of *Ajax* was banished to *Phylace.*

—Γαίης ἀπὸ πατρίδος ἄνδρα κταλαντάς.

Far from his native Country having killed a Man.] Several Examples of this nature *Feithius* has collected in his *Antiqu. Homer, l.* 2. *cap.* 8. And as the Learned *Spelman* has observed in the time of the Saxons, it was not punished with Death here in *England.*

Shem, Ham, *and* Japhet, c. 5. 32.] Tho' we read that *Noah* begot these three Sons, after

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ter he was five hundred years old, yet it is not mentioned which of them is the eldeſt. However, we may gather that the Rights of Primogeniture belonged to *Japhet*, from *Gen.* 11. 10. Shem *was a hundred years old, and begat* Arphaxad, *two years after the flood*; that is, in the ſixth hundred and ſecond year of *Noah*, for the Deluge fell out in the ſixth hundred compleatly. And therefore *Shem* was born to *Noah* when he was five hundred and two years old, and conſequently was not his firſt-begotten, ſince he began to get Children when he was five hundred years old. And as for *Ham* he is expreſly ſaid, *Gen.*9. 24. to be the youngeſt; Whence it neceſſarily follows, that *Japhet* was the eldeſt, who is therefore, tho' by the bye, called *Shem*'s elder Brother, *Gen.* 10. 21.

Nevertheleſs, either becauſe the Nation of the Hebrews was deſcended from *Shem*, or becauſe the Rights of Primogeniture were transferred to him, though the ſacred Hiſtory takes no notice of it; he is both here, and ſometimes below, nominated firſt, as ſeveral Learned Men have imagined. And thus *Abraham*'s Name is mentioned before his Brother's, *chap.* 11. 26. *Jacob*'s before *Eſau*, *chap.* 28. 5. and *Ephraim*'s before *Manaſſeh*, *chap.* 48. 20. I wiſh they had informed us why *Ham* the youngeſt is reckoned the ſecond in order, and *Japhet* laſt though he was the firſt-begotten, both here and *chap.* 7. 13. *chap.* 9. 18.

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9. 18. *chap.* 10. 1. and elsewhere. 'Tis certain that in his Father's Blessing, *chap.* 9. 27. *Japhet* is unquestionably preferred to *Ham*. But perhaps in all these Matters we are more curious than we need; and indeed in the reckoning up of the Generations, *chap.* 10. *Japhet* is placed first, and *Shem* the last. After the same manner *Jacob*, who is generally set before *Esau*, is named after him, *chap.* 35. 29. *And* Jacob *gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his Sons,* Esau *and* Jacob *buried him.*

Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee, chap. 7. 2.] Those Creatures seem first to be called *clean*, which those that call'd them so, fed upon; as on the other hand, those were called *unclean*, from which they abstain'd; for whatever reasons they did it, 'tis certain there is no *Cleanness* or *Uncleanness* in the Animals themselves, as the different use of different Nations sufficiently testifies. After the Mosaical Law there was a twofold Cleanness and Uncleanness in Animals; for only three sorts of clean Quadrupeds, and two of Birds, were allowed in Sacrifices, *Lev.* 1, 2, 14. whereas several more were permitted to be eaten; see *Levit.* 11. But it is doubted whether this Distinction was known in *Noah's* time, because 'tis highly probable that no sort of Flesh was eaten before the Flood. Those that maintain the Affirmative, ground themselves

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upon this Text. However, though God Almighty is here introduced speaking in a direct Oration, according to the Genius of the Oriental Languages; yet it is not manifest that he used these very terms. Perhaps he commanded *Noah* to take Sevens of such Creatures as were wholesome for Food, which are here called *clean*, and only pairs of those that were unwholesome. And perhaps after all, the sacred Writer who has all along a greater regard to the Sense than the bare words, accommodates himself to the Language of his own times.

And Noah *went in and his Sons*, chap. 7. 7.] As *Noah* either had no more Children than these before the Deluge, or if he had, they were not alive: so likewise his Sons either had begot no Children before it happened, or else had buried them. Whatever side the Reader choses, it is evident from hence, that Mankind before the Flood had not peopled many Countries. For if *Noah*'s Family, when he was six hundred years old, only consisted of three Sons who had no issue, we may probably suppose that several more had not a more numerous Off-spring.

Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat to you, ch. 9. 3.] Before the Deluge Man had so far a right over the living Creatures, that he might make use of their Milk, their Wool and their Skins, in case they happen'd to die, and

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and while they were alive, might employ them to draw or carry his Burdens, but was not allowed to feed upon them. Otherwise it had been in vain to have given *Noah* a Permission here to do what was lawful for him before; and besides, *Moses* expressly tells us, *chap.* 29. that Herbs and Fruits were given to the Antidiluvians for Meat. I shall not stay to confute some Theological or Philosophical Conjectures which oppose this Exposition, since they cannot be admitted without committing violence upon the Mosaical History.

And told Abraham *the Hebrew*, c. 14. 13.] Some are of opinion that this is a Patronymic Appellation derived from *Heber*, who is reckon among *Abraham's* Ancestors, *ch.* 11. 14. But the Scripture no where tells us why the Hebrews should rather take their name from him than from any one else. 'Tis certain that *Abraham* might with as much, nay with more pretence have been called the *Therachite* or *Nachorite*; and we have already shown in our first Dissertation, that what the Rabbines impudently tell us of *Heber's* great Piety, and his preserving the ancient Religion and Language in his Family, is a groundless Fiction. Therefore others suppose it is derived from the Preposition *Heber*, which signifies *on the other side*, because *Abraham* was born on the other side the *Euphrates*, and passed that River to come

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come into *Canaan*. Of this Opinion were the LXX. who have translated it περάτην, and *Origen* upon *Matthew*, ἑβραῖοι, οἵτινες ἑρμηνεύοντας περατικοὶ. The same likewise was the Judgment of St. *Jerome*, whose words upon the 7th Chapter of *Ezekiel* are as follows; *Abraham Hebræus*, i. e. περάτης, & *peregrinus*, *transitorq; memoratur*. Now the reason why this Appellation was not given to the Edomites, or the other Descendants of *Lot* and *Abraham*, but only to *Abraham*'s Posterity by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, is, because the first was really born beyond the *Euphrates*, and the second fetched him a Wife from thence, as refusing to enter into such an Alliance with the Canaanites, whom in this particular *Jacob* followed, who likewise lived a great part of his Life on the other side of that River.

Thou shalt go to thy Fathers in Peace, ch. 15. 15.] This is a common Periphrasis of Death, like these in Latin, *ire ad plures, ire in communem locum*. *R. Salomon* concludes from hence, that *Therah* who was an Idolater, repented before he died, and that his Soul went to the Mantions of the Blessed, because it is here said, that *Abraham* who was a pious Man, and acceptable to God, shou'd go to him. But St. *Jerome* has rightly observed, that this Expression is not to be depended upon, since the Good and Bad when they die, are equally said

to

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to go to their Fathers. The Hebrews likewiſe mean the ſame thing by this Phraſe, *to be gathered to his People*; which is uſed concerning *Abraham*, ch. 25. 8. but can be urged no more than the former, ſince 'tis plain that neither was *Abraham* buried with his Country-men the Chaldeans; but purchaſed himſelf a Monument in *Canaan*: Neither can his Soul be ſaid when it quitted his Body, to be in the ſame condition with that of the Chaldean Idolaters. However, theſe Phraſes (whatever the Signification of them might afterwards be) ſeem to take their Original from ſuch like Opinion as this, *viz.* that the Souls of the Dead go to ſome certain Receptacles, where every Nation and Family live apart by themſelves. *Ezekiel, ch.* 32. *v.* 22. and the following Verſes, ſeems to allude to this Opinion, Aſhur *is there, and all her Company*, &c.

And he lift up his Eyes, and looked, and lo three Men ſtood by him, ch. 18. 2.] Some pretend that theſe were three Angels in humane ſhape; one of whom, as being chief of the Embaſſy, came to *Abraham*, and the other two went to carry God's Commands to *Lot*. But others are of Opinion, that he who is called *Jehovah*, *v.* 13, 14, 17, 20, 22. and whom *Abraham* calls *the Judges of the Earth*, *v.* 25. 27. was the ſecond Perſon of the holy Trinity. But as theſe People make the Divinity aſſume

a

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a humane ſhape upon trivial grounds, not altogether ſo becoming the Divine Majeſty, as they have none of the Jews that lived in the Apoſtolical times to countenance their Opinion. 'Tis certain, that if *Abraham* did really entertain the higheſt God, the Exhortation of the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, *ch.* 13. 2. is one of the coldeſt things in the World, *Be not forgetful to entertain Strangers, for thereby ſome have entertained Angels unawares.* He ought to have added, *nay and God himſelf*, which had made his Argument much more efficacious. However, theſe ancient Stories of the Angels travelling up and down the Earth in humane ſhapes, ſeem to have given occaſion to the Opinion of the Pagans, that the Gods uſed to viſit Mankind. Thus one of *Penelope's* Suiters in the *Odyſſes*, blames *Antinous* for ſtriking *Ulyſſes*, *becauſe*, ſays he, *the Gods are accuſtomed to travel thro' Towns and Cities in the Diſguiſe of Gueſts, to behold the Manners and Behaviour of Mortals.* See *Acts* 14, 11. Now it was not the Cuſtom of Travellers at this time to knock at the Door, or to ſpeak to thoſe Perſons firſt by whom they hoped to be entertained: But they only ſtood in the High-way, waiting till they were called, and at their departure uſed to receive a *Viaticum* from their Hoſt, to ſupport them upon the Road. For in thoſe Ages there were no Inns in the Eaſtern Countries, no more than

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than there are now a days, except a few *Kervanſera's*, as they call them, for the Reception of Strangers; ſo that they muſt either lye all night in the Streets if they came to any Town, or elſe lye in ſome Body's Houſe who was ſo kind as to receive them. A remarkable Inſtance of this we find in *Judges*, ch. 19. 15. Thus likewiſe among the Greeks and Romans, though in the latter Ages they had Inns and Victualing Houſes, yet formerly they had none. Hence came the Faſhion of lodging in private Houſes, and hence Hoſpitality came to be ſo much commended. Upon which Argument conſult *Tomaſinus de Teſſeris.*

And Abraham *there called on the name of the Lord, the everlaſting God,* ch. 21. 33.] Perhaps the ſacred Hiſtorian added this Epithet here, to diſtinguiſh the true God, whom *Abraham* worſhipped, from thoſe Divinities that were ſometimes born, and were to dye at laſt. If *Philo Byblius*'s *Sanchoniathon* was a faithful Expoſitor of the Phœnician Theology, thoſe People only own'd two Gods to be eternal, and held that the reſt were generated; for after that manner does he explain their Doctrine in *Euſebius, Dem. Evang.* l. 1. c. 10. *He teaches that the firſt Principle of all things was a dark dusky Air full of Wind, or the breath of a dusky Air, and a turbid* Chaos, *encom-*

encompaſſed with Darkneſs: That theſe were eternal, and had not an end in many Ages. And afterwards relates the Generations of the Gods, who alone were worſhipt. The Grecians believed that the Nymphs were born with Oaks, and that they died along with them; and perhaps they borrowed this Opinion from the Oriental Nations, as they did ſeveral more. Thus we find in *Plutarch, de Oracul. Defectu*, that *Cleombrotus* ſuppoſes thoſe Deities that had been the Preſidents of Oracles formerly to be dead; upon which follows the famous Story of the Death of *Pan the Great*, and other Relations of that nature; by which it appears that the Nymphs and Dæmons, or their Gods of the lower rank, was commonly believed to be mortal, altho' they were long-lived. Therefore *Abraham* ſeems to have oppoſed the everlaſting God, who had no beginning, and who is capable of no end; to ſome ſuch ſort of an Opinion received by the Eaſtern People.

And there was ſet Meat before him to eat, but he ſaid, I will not eat till I have told my Errand.] In the ancient times it was uſual to receive Strangers, and entertain them with a Repaſt, before they asked them any Queſtions. Thus after *Neſtor* had given a plentiful Meal to *Telemachus*, *Odyſſes*, *l.* 3. and the other had eaten as much as was ſufficient, then

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then at last the old Gentleman thought it high time to examine him: *'Tis best to ask News of Strangers*, says he,

ἐπεὶ τάρπησαν ἐδωδῆς,

i. e. *after they have filled their Bellies.* Nay, sometimes several days pass'd over their Heads, before they thought fit to lay down the occasion of their coming. Thus *Esdras* and his Companions, who brought the Vessels belonging to the Temple, *staid three days in* Jerusalem, before they restored them to the Priests. Thus, *Iliad.* 8. *Homer* tells us that the King of *Lycia* entertained *Bellerophon* for nine days successively, and that when the tenth Morning appear'd, he began to ask him Questions. *Dares Phrygius* speaking of *Antenor*, who was sent Ambassador to *Peleus*, tells us, that the latter well-comed him for the space of three days, but on the fourth enquired upon what Message he came; *Die quarto rogat eum quid venerit.* After the same manner *Laban* here took *Abraham*'s Servant within doors, and set some Meat before him, though he had no Acquaintance with him, and asked him no Questions; but the other finding that God had directly sent him to *Abraham*'s Relations, was in pain till he had delivered his Errand.

Tell

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Tell me I pray thee thy name, ch. 32. 22.] Some Interpreters suspect that *Jacob* knew his Antagonist, with whom he wrestled, to be an Angel, because he desired him to bless him; but then this Passage makes them at a stand: for how cou'd he imagine to be a jot the better after he knew the Angel's name. We are desirous to know the names of those, with whom we have any dealing, because when we once know that, we may find out who, and what manner of Men they are, by enquiring of those that are better acquainted with them. But since there is no Correspondence between us and the Angels, after we know the names of two or three of them, we know them no more than we did before. Thus *Manoah*, who took the Angel that appear'd to him for a Prophet, desires him to tell him his name, and subjoins this reason for it, that *when thy Sayings are come to pass, we may do thee honour*; that is, give thee all the respect that is usually paid to a Prophet. 'Tis true indeed, that the Jews and the other Eastern People, talked much of the names of Angels in the following times; but 'tis scarce credible that in *Jacob*'s days such Notions were current, nor do we find the least footstep of them in the Bible before *Daniel*.

Ask

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Ask me never so much Dowry and Gift, ch. 34. 12.] It was the Fashion of that Age for the Suitor to offer Presents to the young Woman's Parents, as appears plainly by this Passage. Thus also in the Heroical times, *quorum mores*, says our Author, *multa Orientalibus habent similia*, among the Greeks, the Son-in-law that was to be paid his ἕδνα, to the Father of the Girl, which we learn from several places of *Homer*, collected by *Feithius*, in his *Antiquitates Homericæ*, *l.* 2. *c.* 11. As for instance, in the *Odysses*, where *Vulcan* is said to find *Mars* in very scurvy Circumstances with his Wife, and to chain them both to their good Behaviour, he protests he will not release them, till *her Father returns every farthing of the Portion he gave him for his Harlot of a Daughter, because she was handsom.* Hence *Aristotle*, *Polit. l* 2. *c.* 8. relating the most ancient Manners of the Greeks, tells us among other things, that *they purchased their Wives of one another.* At this day the same is practised by the Turks and Persians. See *Thevenot*'s Travels, *l.* 1. *c.* 41.

And they gave unto Jacob *all the strange Gods, and all their Ear-rings*, c. 35. 4.] There were two sorts of Ear-rings, one of which were chiefly worn by the Women for Orna-

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ment sake, but are not meant in this place; the other were esteemed sacred, and the Men used to wear them as an Amulet to preserve them from all harm. Perhaps too some figures were ingraved upon them under a certain Constellation, after the manner of Talismans, which the Idolatrous People fondly imagined to have great Efficacy in them. Among the Carthaginians, not only the free men, but their very Slaves had their Ears loaded with Rings. *Plautus* in *Pœnulo, Acts* 5. *sc.* 2. speaking of the *Punic* Slaves, introduces *Milphio* thus discoursing with *Agorastocles*;

I suppose these Fellows are troubled with no such things as Fingers,
AG. Why so? MC. Because they carry their Rings in their Ears.

These Rings hung down from the top of the Ear, as appears from St. *Austin*, in whose time this Superstition still continued among some *African* Christians. These are his words, in *Epist.* 73. *Execranda autem superstitio ligaturarum, in quibus etiam inaures virorum in summis ex unâ parte auricubis suspensæ deputantur, sed ad serviendum Dæmonibus adhibetur.* These Rings, in his Questions upon this place, he calls the *Phylacteries of Idols*. *Jacob's* Servants here seem to have carried such sort of Rings

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Rings in their Ears, which he commanded them to lay aside, as being consecrated to strange Gods.

And they sate down to eat, ch. 37. v. 25.] After the manner of the Oriental People, who used to lay a Carpet upon the Floor, and so sate down to eat, which Custom still continues, and when they were in the Country either sate upon the green Grass, or upon the Skin of some Beast. Among the ancient Persians, their Kings seem to have observed the same Posture, as appears by *Darius*'s Table, which was so low, that when *Alexander* sate upon *Cyrus*'s Throne, it served him for a Footstool. For thus *Curtius*, *l.* 5. *c.* 2. tells us, that *afterwards he sate in the Royal Throne, which was much too high for him, and as his Feet did not touch the lowest Step, one of the King's Pages put a Table under them*; which a little below is said to be the same where *Darius* dined. *Homer*'s Heroes too sate at their Meat, but upon Seats.

I will go down into the Grave to my Son, ch. 37. v. 35.] In the Hebrew 'tis *Sheolah*. The LXX have rendred it εἰς ᾅδου, and the Vulgar *in infernum*. This word and the ancient Translations of it, have not a little employ'd the Interpreters of the Old and New

Testament. We shall set down the undoubted Significations of it as briefly as we can, and then enquire in what Sense it is here to be taken. In the first place it signifies any place below the Superficies of the Earth, whether made hollow by Art or Nature. Hence *Isaiah* metaphorically uses it to denote a low and mean Condition, *ch.* 14. 11. and for the same reason *Jonas* calls the Fish's Belly by the same name. Secondly, it is taken for a Grave or Sepulchre, *Is.* 14. 15. where the King of *Babylon* is said to be brought down *to Hell, to the sides of the Pit*; which words are there set down as Synonimes. See likewise, *Psalm* 141. 7. In the third place it does not so much seem to signify the Grave, as the State of the Dead, or the Place where they are poetically feign'd to rest, and discourse together. Thus in the 14th Chapter of *Isaiah*, the King of *Babylon*, who is expressly said, *v.* 19, 20. to be cast out of the Grave, and to be denied a Burial, is yet in the ninth Verse supposed to go *Scholah to Hell*, where the Dead come to meet him. *Hell* (Schol) *from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the Dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the Earth; it has raised up from their Thrones all the Kings of the Nations: All they shall speak*, &c. see *Ezekiel*, ch. 32. And by this word is meant not the Man-

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Mansions of the happy, such as the *Elysian* Fields, or the fortunate Islands, were among the Grecians, but the common Receptacle of the Dead in general, as appears not only by the above-mentioned places, but *Isa.* c. 2. 17. *ch.* 10. 21. and several other Passages of the Old Testament. Now 'tis past dispute that it is not here to be taken in the first Signification; so that the Question is, Whether *Jacob* meant the Grave, or else the Place and State of the Dead? It cannot be pretended that he meant the former; for how cou'd he say, *I will go down into the Grave to my Son*, since he did not believe him to be buried, but to be torn to pieces by a wild Beast? Therefore we must understand it of the Place or State of the Dead, as the LXX Interpreters have done, who have rendered it καταβήσομαι πρὸς τὸν υἱόν μου πενθῶν εἰς ᾅδου; and the Vulgar, *Descendam ad filium meum lugens in infernum.* But what Sentiments *Jacob* had of that State or Receptacle of the Deceased, no Circumstances out of History inform us, nor can we safely judge of his, by our own Opinion upon that matter.

You are Spies, to see the Nakedness of the Land are you come, ch. 42. 9.] This Suspicion of *Joseph* was so much the more plausible, because his Brothers came from those

parts, by which alone *Ægypt* is accessible on the side of *Asia*. *This is the only place*, says *Herodotus*, l. 3. c. 5. *where* Ægypt *can be openly entered*; where he relates at large how *Cambyses* invaded it, and marched with his Army this way. Consult but *Ptolomy's* Tables, and the matter appears plain enough. It was on all sides secured from the hostile Incursions of the *Africans*, if we may believe *Diodorus Siculus*, *lib.* 1. *Bibl.* by large unpassable Deserts. The Sea which lies to the Northwards of it, is shallow and destitute of Harbours, so that it did not fear an Invasion from that quarter: Only on the Eastern Frontier it lay open and unguarded. For this reason *Sesostris*, to secure this Pass against the Irruptions of the Syrians and Arabians, fortified it with a Wall fifteen hundred furlongs in length, which reached from *Pelusium* to *Heliopolis*. *Diod. lib.* 1. *p.* 52. and upon the same account perhaps it was that *Nero* the Son of *Psammetichus*, King of *Ægypt*, drew a Trench from the *Pelusiac* Arm of the *Nile*, to the Gulf of *Arabia*, and endeavoured to joyn the *Mediterranean* to the Southern Sea.

They knew not that Joseph *understood them, for he spoke unto them by an Interpreter*, ch. 42. 23.] Although the Ægyptian and Hebrew Language nearly resembled one another, yet

yet there might be that difference between them, as the *Canaanites* and the *Ægyptians* cou'd not understand one another in ordinary Discourse. Thus we see the French don't understand the Italians or Spaniards, although these three Languages are derived from the Latin; and thus in the time of the Kings, the Jews did not commonly understand the Chaldean Tongue, as appears from 2 *Kings*, *ch.* 18. *v.* 26. Now 'tis evident from this place, that *Jacob*'s Sons spoke in the Canaanitish Language, unless we wou'd rather suppose them to speak Chaldee, and not a Tongue which was only peculiar to one Family, as the Rabbines pretend: for then how had it been possible to have procured an Interpreter, unless we suppose that one of *Jacob*'s Servants had run away from his Master, and fled into *Ægypt*, of which we don't find the least mention.

They sate before him, the first-born according to his Birth-right, and the youngest according to his Youth; and he took and sent Messes unto them, but Benjamin's *Mess was five times so much as any of the rest*, ch. 43. v. 33.] Though we have no account in any Profane Authors of the Customs used by the Ancients at their Feasts, which equal this in Antiquity, yet it may receive some Illustration

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from what we find in *Homer*. In the first place *Homer's* Heroes did not sit down promiscuously, as we do about our round Tables, but every Man according to his Quality, or the Respect which the Master of the Feast was minded to show him. Thus *Hector* upbraids *Diomede* when he run away, that the Grecians honour'd him with a Seat and Flesh, and full Cups.

Ἕδρῃ τε, κρεασίν τε, ἰδὲ πλείοις δεπάεσσι.

The ἕδρα here seems to be the προεδρία, as *Eustathius* has remarked upon this place, that is, the chief Seat at Table. Secondly, 'tis evident that in the Heroical times they used long Tables, or *perpetuæ mensæ*, as *Virgil* calls them: So that the most honourable Seat was consequently at the upper end, where we may suppose *Reuben* sate, and his other Brethren below him, according to their Age. Thirdly, as here in *Moses*, so we find in *Homer*, that each of the Guests had his equal Dividend of Meat, unless a greater Portion was bestowed upon any one of them, to show him more Honour. For this reason, as *Athenæus* informs us, *l.* 11. *Homer* calls them δαῖτας ἐίσας, or *equal Feasts*. In short, as it appears from the above-mentioned place in *Homer*, where mention is made of *Diomede*, that

that he had a larger ſhare of Victuals allow'd him upon the ſcore of his Valour; ſo *Joſeph* ordered *Benjamin* to be treated after this manner, *honoris cauſâ*.

The Cup whereby my Lord divineth, chap. 44. 5.] The ſacred Volumes no where take notice of any Divination perform'd by a Cup: and what ſeveral Learned Men have told us of the Effuſion of Wine in the Jewiſh Sacrifices out of a Cup, is nothing to the purpoſe, ſince it does not at all appear that they gathered any Auguries that way. The ancient Grecians indeed made a Judgement of future Events by the noiſe of the Wine poured out in honour of the Divinity, and before their Libations pray'd to the Gods to ſend them ſome auſpicious Signs. Sometimes too they threw this Wine into the Fire, and the greater the Flame was, ſo much the better was the Omen. We find in 2 *Samuel* 23. 16. that Water was ſometimes poured out unto the Lord; but the Scripture in no place informs us that the Jews gather'd any Omens from thence. And therefore as the Greeks borrow'd great part of their Religious Rites from the Ægyptians, 'tis probable that the latter, obſerved the ſame Method in their Libations, and that *Joſeph* had a reſpect to them here.

That

That you may dwell in the Land of Goshen, ch. 46. 34.] 'Tis unquestionable that the Land of *Goshen* was situate in the Lower *Ægypt*, as also that it was the first Province or *Nomus*, which a Traveller coming out *Syria* enters, since *Jacob* so soon as he came thither, sent to acquaint *Joseph* with the news of his Arrival. By this place it appears, that it was famous for rich Pastures, otherwise it wou'd ne're have been offer'd to a Company of Shepherds, as the most convenient place in the Kingdom for them. 'Tis likewise certain, that this Tract of Land was appropriated to the Ægyptian Shepherds, who lived separate from the rest of their Country-men: For otherwise how cou'd *Joseph* conclude, that this Province wou'd be assigned to his Brethren immediately, upon their discovering what Occupation they followed, unless it was the Custom of that Nation so to do? As will plainly appear by the following words.

For every Shepherd is an Abomination to the Ægyptians, ch. 46. 34.] Learned Men are used to enquire upon this place the first, whether it appears by any Testimony out of Prophane Authors, that the Ægyptians avoided the Company of Shepherds? The second,

ſecond, for what reaſon they hated them? As for what regards the former, we don't here mean all Shepherds in general, but only ſuch as fed *Sheep* or *Goats*. According to *Herodotus*, *l.* 2. *c.* 164. the Ægyptians were divided into ſeven Claſſes, *Prieſts*, *Soldiers*, *Cow-herds*, *Hog-herds*, *Merchants*, *Interpreters*, *and Sea-men*. As for the Cow-herds, we no where find that the Ægyptians deſpiſed them, but the above-cited Hiſtorian expreſly affirms ſo much of the Hog-herds, *ch.* 47. where he tells us, that the reſt of the Ægyptians refuſed to have any Alliances with them. Among the Mendeſians, if we may believe him, Goat-herds lived in great reputation, becauſe they worſhipped Goats. But theſe ſame People that looked upon it to be a hainous Sin to ſacrifice Goats, thought it no Crime to ſerve Sheep after that manner. The contrary to which was obſerved by the Thebans, as we find in the ſame Author. So far *Herodotus*, who is more particular in this Affair than any one elſe; however, he does not ſeem to conſiſt with himſelf, for ſince he makes two different Ranks of his Hog-herds and Cow-herds, why does he not farther branch them out into Goat-herds and Shep-herds? *&c.* with much more reaſon on his ſide. *Diodorus* comprehends them all under the name

of

of Νομέων, or *Pastors*, but does not acquaint us in what Credit they lived with the other Ægyptians.

Now with Submission to Persons of greater Learning, I am of Opinion that as the Ægyptian Superstition varied with respect to Time and Place; so that eating of Sheep was held unlawful in the *Tanitic* Kingdom in *Joseph*'s time, and that as the Shepherds did either really feed upon them, or at least were suspected to do so, the rest of the Ægyptians shun'd their Company. Thus they thought they contracted an Impurity if they kissed a Grecian, because the latter made no difficulty to eat Cow's Flesh, which Animal was mightily ador'd in *Ægypt*. For this reason they cou'd not be brought to use so much as a Knife or a Kettle, if it came out of *Greece*, out of a fear that the Flesh of a Cow might have been cut by the former, or boiled in the latter. Though we are told by *Herodotus* that the *Mendesians* used to sacrifice, and consequently to eat Sheep; yet at the same time he informs us, that the *Thebans*, who had a much greater Authority in the Country, abstained from it: and *Diodorus*, *lib.* 1. *p.* 99. reckons Sheep among those Creatures from which the Ægyptians abstained. Besides those private Reasons which the Priests assign'd for this Abstinence,

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stinence, he says the following ones were used to be given, *viz.* that Sheep brought forth Young twice a year, that they cloathed Mankind with their Wool, and nourished them with Milk and Cheese. And therefore since several of the Ægyptians either for these, or some other Reasons, abstained from Sheeps Flesh, what wonder is it, if they expressed an utter Aversion to those Men whom they knew, or else suspected to feed upon it, if they shun'd their Conversion, and obliged to live by themselves in a particular Tract of their Country? Indeed some Learned Men doubt whether we can discover any certain Tokens of Idolatry in *Ægypt* so early as the days of *Joseph*, but what they pretend they can no where find; this *Moses* expresly teaches us, *Exod.* 8. 26. and the Israelites became infected with Idolatry in *Ægypt*, as *Ezekiel* lays it to their charge, *ch.* 20. *v.* 7, 8.

And Joseph placed his father and his brethren in the land of Rameses, ch. 46. 11.] Here cannot be signified that City, which is said, *Ex.* 1. 11. to be built long after the Death of *Joseph* by the Israelites; nor indeed had these People, who lived under Tents and removed from one Place to another, any occasion for a City at first: Therefore others understand it to be part of the Country of *Goshen*.

The

The Conjecture of the learned Sir *John Marsham* seems to be the best grounded, who supposes it to be the Name of a King, and used in the Genitive Case. For *Diodorus* tells us, that the third part of all *Egypt* belonged to the King, and therefore 'tis all one as if *Moses* had said, that part of the Lands belonging to the Crown was granted to *Jacob* and his Family. The abovementioned ingenious Author has proved out of *Syncellus*, that *Rameſſes Tubaetes* reign'd at that time in *Egypt*, upon *Sæcul*, VII.

Diſſertation

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Dissertation XIII.

Concerning the Passage of the Israelites *thro' the* Red Sea.

I. *The Occasion of this Dissertation.* II. *The Division thereof.* III. *An Explication of the Words of* Moses, *and an Enquiry into the Time when the Wind, which divided the Sea, began to blow, that the* Israelites might go *over the Sea in a short time.* IV. *That the Wind encreased the* Reflux *of the Sea towards the* Ocean, *and divided not the Waters, so as to heap them up on both sides, as 'tis commonly believed. How easily this could be done.* V. *That the Wind, which drove the Waters towards the Ocean, was a* North-Wind. VI. *That* Josephus *understood it so, when he compared the Passage of the* Israelites *with* Alexander's *Passage through the shores of the Sea of* Pamphylia; *to which he might have added a noble Exploit of* P. Scipio. VII. *This Opinion is confirm'd by the Circumstances of the Death of the* Egyptians. VIII. *The Memory of that Passage,*

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Passage, preserved among the Ichthyophagi. *A Tale out of* Paulus Orosius. IX. *That the Passage of the* Israelites *was a true Miracle.* X. *The Conclusion.*

I. MEN are so fond of *Prodigies*, as to believe often without any Reason, that God alter'd the ordinary Course of Nature; of which I have given a pregnant Instance, in my Dissertation concerning *the Statue of Salt.* Tho' such an Opinion ought not to be approv'd, because it fills the Minds of Men with a superstitious Credulity, exposes the Sacred History to the Contempt and Laughter of Prophane Men, and makes them disbelieve true Miracles and Prodigies; yet we ought to bear with those who entertain it, because if they add something to the Scripture, they take nothing from it; and because their Opinion arises from a Mind inclin'd to ascribe whatever is Great and Wonderful to the Divine Power. But those who put a false Interpretation upon true and manifest Miracles, and dare ascribe every thing to the ordinary Course of Nature, can't be endured, for they came by this Opinion out of Obstinacy and Pride, which Vices allow them not to admire any thing, or believe any that's unusual and extraordinary. It may be said further, that because they dare not openly deny some Facts grounded upon very good Reasons, and undeniable Testimonies, they endeavour to undermine

mine the belief of them, whilst they can hardly confess, that any thing happens above the ordinary Course of Nature.

Omitting for the present what may be said concerning Prodigies and Miracles in general, I shall endeavour to vindicate one of them from the Cavils of some Men, by giving a clear Explication of it. I mean the Passage of the *Israelites* through the *Red Sea* upon the dry Ground, as *Moses* relates it, *Exod.* 14. Those who affirm, that all this happened according to the ordinary Course of Nature, say, that *Moses*, who knew that Country well, observed the time of the Tide, and that the Sea retiring back, as it is wont to do, he might easily go from one Shoar to another upon the dry ground; and that being a Cunning Man, he vented among the ignorant Multitude, as a Prodigy what happened according to the ordinary Laws of Nature. Were it not so, say they, the *Egyptians* had not gone boldly into the Sea as as well as the *Israelites*; and they had not been so bold as to follow them, if they had seen the Sea divided by a Miracle, lest he who had divided the Waters of the Sea, only for the sake of the *Israelites*, should bring them back into their Channel, to destroy the *Egyptians*. They add, That perhaps the Wind favoured by chance, the Design of *Moses*, and wonderfully encreased the Retreat of the Sea, as the Writer of that History intimates, when he observes,

that *The Lord caused the Sea to go back by a Strong Wind.*

II. 'Tis not my business at present, to vindicate the veracity of *Moses*; it will be sufficient to shew, that their Assertion is contrary to his Words; for these Men are so confident of their Ability as to think, that they can maintain their Opinion by the very words of the Scripture. Wherefore I shall first explain the words of *Moses*, and before I shew how far the Power of God was concerned in this matter, I'll enquire into what could be done by the Power of Second Causes; and then I'll shew what what God himself did towards it, and what was done by the Second Causes; Lastly, I shall answer the Objections of our Adversaries.

III. God speaks thus to *Moses*, *Exod.* 14. 16. *But lift up thy Rod, and stretch out thine hand over the Sea, and divide it: and the children of* Israel *shall go on dry ground through the midst of the Sea.* It appears from Verse 20, 21. That *Moses* received those orders towards the Evening. Then *Moses* obeying God's Orders, smote the Sea, but it was not presently divided; for thus we find Verse 21. *And* Moses *stretched out his hand over the Sea, and the Lord caused the Sea to go back by a strong Wind all the Night, and made the Sea dry Land, and the Waters were divided.* When therefore *Moses* smote the Sea, there arose a strong Wind, which divided the Waters by degrees; for *Moses*

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ſes himſelf ſays, that the Wind drove back the Waters of the Sea *all that Night*, that is, almoſt all the Night; for the *Egyptians* were already gone into the Sea, in purſuit of the *Iſraelites*, *in the Morning Watch*, as he ſays V. 24.

'Tis well known, that the *Hebrews* divided the Night into three *Watches*; which being ſo, and ſeeing the Sacred Hiſtory tells us, that the Sea return'd *in the Morning-watch*; 'tis likely, that the Wind blew almoſt 12 Hours together, from Sun-ſetting to Sun-riſing: for the *Iſraelites* departed a little after the *Equinox* of the Spring. If we knew in what Watch of the Day or Night the Sea covered the Shores, or retired from them, we might explain this matter more accurately. But ſeeing the Sea Ebs and Flows in twelve Hours, 'tis likely, that it began to go back in the beginning of the Night, and that the *Reflux* was haſtened and encreaſed by a ſtrong Wind: but the next Tide was ſlower, the ſame Wind blowing ſtill, and keeping back the Waves for ſome time; during which interval of time, the *Iſraelites* went through the dry Channel of the Sea. Let us ſuppoſe, for Example, that the Sea being return'd to the South, was to flow again towards the North, about the beginning of the Second Watch, if there had been no Wind; the Sea might have gone back, before the Second Watch, by reaſon of the Violence of the Wind, and not have returned to the Northern Shores of the *Red Sea* but ſome Hours later;

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ter; ſothat the *Iſraelites* might go over during the whole Second Watch; that is, during four Hours at leaſt. Indeed they were already gone through the Sea, before the Morning-watch, in which all the *Egyptians* went into the Channel and were Drowned.

Now that we may underſtand how ſo many Thouſands of Men might go through the *Red Sea* in ſo ſhort a time, we ought to conſider two things; Firſt, that the extremity of that Gulph is very narrow, as 'tis granted by all thoſe, who wrote about it, and not above two Miles broad. It was therefore no difficult *thing* for the *Iſraelites*, though they were ſo numerous, to go a great pace through the Channel of the Sea in a few Hours, which otherwiſe could not be underſtood, if it was broader. From whence alſo it follows, that the Sea going back towards the South, leaves not only the Shores dry, but its very Channel, becauſe of the narrowneſs of the place, unleſs it be deeper in ſome places. I think there is no need I ſhould prove, that the *Iſraelites* went through it at the further end of the Gulph, ſeeing it plainly appears that they did, from the ſituation of the place in which they encamped, as it is deſcribed *Exod.* 14. 2.

Secondly, It ought to be obſerved, that there was no need the *Iſraelites* ſhould run away in Battle aray, and in a long File. A great ſpace having been dryed by the Wind, they might go over in a large Front, as the *Egyptians*

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ans tried to do it after them; for the whole Army of the *Egyptians* had not been drowned, if few of them had gone together, ſeeing thoſe that were beyond, had been at a great diſtance from thoſe that were in the Front. But all the *Egyptians* were drowned, not one excepted; from whence it is manifeſt, that they went into the Channel of the Sea in a large Front.

IV. But I muſt conſider more carefully the ſtrength of the Wind which blew upon the Sea, *Exod.* 14. 29. *The Children of* Iſrael, ſays *Moſes*, *walked upon dry Land in the midſt of the Sea, and the Waters were a Wall unto them, on their right hand and on their left.* Which words ought not to be taken in a literal ſence, nor thoſe which we find *Exod.* 15. 8. *With the blaſt of thy Noſtrils the Waters were gathered together: the Floods ſtood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the Sea.* Who ſees not that this is a Figurative Speech? For 1. God blows not with his *Noſtrils*, nor did *Moſes* believe he did, who teaches every where, that God hath no humane ſhape, 2. There is a great difference between a Heap of Corn and a bulk of Ice; nor could the driving of the Waters into the Ocean be compared to both, but in a Figurative ſence, from whence it appears, that neither of them can be underſtood in a proper ſence, 3. Had the Waters been congealed on both ſides, there had been no need of a *Strong Wind* blowing all *that Night*, to uphold its Weight; for from the

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time the Water was divided, and congealed on both ſides, it could not return into the middle Channel, but by the melting of the Ice. In like manner; the Water might be ſaid to be as *as a Wall* unto the *Iſraelites*, becauſe they could not go through it, on the Right hand, or on the Left; nor does any thing hinder, but there might be ſome Water on their Left Hand, in deep Pits, tho' the greateſt part of it was removed to the Right Hand, by the Ebbing of the Sea, and the Ford through which they went was left dry. Thus *Nahum* 3.8. the Sea is ſaid to be *a wall* to the City of *No. Art thou better* ſays the Prophet, *than populous* No, *that was ſituate among the Rivers, that had the waters round about it, whoſe rampart was the Sea, and her wall was from the Sea.*

I think therefore, that ſuch was the Diviſion of the Waters of the Red Sea, that when the Wind, which encreaſed its Ebbing, had driven all the Waters, except that which remained in deep Pits, from the further end of the Gulph towards its Mouth, there appeared a large Ford over againſt the *Iſraelites*, through which they went to the oppoſite Shore; which could the more eaſily happen, becauſe that Sea being full of Fords, when there happens a greater Reflux then ordinarily, thoſe Fords are left dry; tho' as I ſhall ſhew hereafter, the Wind which God raiſed, drove the Sea farther then ever it was before, or hath been ſince, that we know of.

Moſt of thoſe, who deſcribed that Sea, ſay that 'tis Fordable. They alſo ſay that it hath

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a violent Ebbing and Flowing. *P. Belonius* Obſerv. Book II. ch. 67. Speaking of a Town call'd now *Tor*, ſays, That *it is Situated on a high place, for the Sea ſwells ſometimes ſo much, that it overflows the Fields, and ſurrounds the Town with its Waters.* Nor can it be otherwiſe in a Narrow Streight, eſpecially when it reaches from South to North; for the Sea flows from the South, thro' a Narrow Paſſage with great violence, and having no room to Expatiate, it muſt needs be high: on the contrary when it Ebbs, it muſt of neceſſity leave many Fords empty, and the extremity of the Golph almoſt dry.

However a place out of *Pſalm* 136. *v.* 13. may be objected againſt my Hypotheſis. There 'tis ſaid, *That God divided the Red Sea into Parts:* which words ſeem to imply that the Waters were ſo divided by the Wind, as to be driven on the right hand and on the left. But they might be ſaid *to be divided into Parts*, if the Water remain'd on both ſides, tho' it was not heap'd up by the ſtrength of the Wind; for the Water, which return'd towards the South, was ſeparated from that which remain'd in the Northern Pits: Which Water left in thoſe Pits, may be call'd *a Part*, becauſe it was ſeparated from the reſt of the Water by the violence of the Wind.

We read in the Annals of *Geneva*, that in the Year MCCCCXC. the South-wind blew with ſo great a Violence, that the Water of the *Rhone*, (a moſt ſwift River,) flowing from the

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Leman Lake to the South, ſtood ſtill a quarter of an Hour. In like manner the Wind might encreaſe the Motion of the Ebbing Sea, and ſtop its Impetuoſity when it flowed again. It was obſerved in *Holland*, in the Year MDCLXXII. that the Ebbing of the Sea laſted Twelve Hours, which hindred the Deſcent of the Engliſh: whether this was the Effect of the Wind, or ſome other cauſe, is not well known. Why therefore could not the Ebbing of the Red Sea laſt longer than it uſually did, through the Divine Will, and return Later to the ſame Shores?

V. Having thus explain'd the Words of *Moſes* which concern the thing itſelf, it will not be needleſs to enquire from what part of Heaven the Wind blew. *The Lord*, ſays *Moſes*, *cauſed the Sea to go back by a ſtrong* Eaſt-Wind *all that night*, as our Tranſlation renders it. But I am of Opinion the *Hebrew* word *Kadim* cannot here ſignifie an *Eaſt-Wind*, becauſe ſuch a Wind was fitter to drive the Floods to the Shore, wherein the *Iſraelites* were, than to divide the Waters; unleſs we ſuppoſe that it blew only on a certain part of the Sea, ſo as to hinder the Waters from running in the middle. But who can apprehend how ſo many thouſands of Men could, I will not ſay, ſtand in the Channel of the Sea, but go thro' it in ſo ſhort a time, whilſt ſo violent a Whirl-wind blew in their Faces?

I ſhould think therefore that the Word *Kadim*

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dim denotes not that part of Heaven from whence this Wind blew, but a *Violent Wind*, from whenceſoever it blew. Nor did *Moſes* add the word *ſtrong*, becauſe the Wind call'd *Kadim* is not commonly a violent one; but becauſe the Wind, which drove the Waters of the Red Sea towards the Ocean, was extreamly violent. The word *Kadim* ſignifies a violent Wind, *Pſal.* 48. 8. *Ezech.* 27. 26. *Job* 27. 21. *Jer.* 18. 17. *Iſa.* 27. 8. *Jon.* 4. 8. we may therefore underſtand by the word *Kadim* a North-wind. Nor could any other Wind open a paſſage to the *Iſraelites* thro' the Fords of the Sea, as I have ſhewed.

VI. The thing it ſelf favours my opinion, as we have ſeen, and no ſtrong Argument can be brought againſt it from the words of *Moſes*. Some therefore will perhaps endeavour to confute it ſome other way, *Viz.* by accuſing it of Novelty. But I may ſhelter my ſelf under the Authority of *Joſephus*, who ſeems to have had the like thoughts, when he compared the Paſſage of the *Iſraelites* with *Alexander*'s March thro' the Sea of *Pamphylia*, in theſe words, Book II. towards the End: *No Body will admire that ſtrange Story, that Men, who liv'd many Ages ago, and were free from malice found a way to eſcape, even thro' the Sea, whether God would have it ſo, or whether it happen'd by chance; ſeeing the Sea of* Pamphylia *gave way to* Alexander *King of* Macedonia, *who liv'd not long ago, and open'd a Paſſage to him,*

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him, when he had no other, when God deſign'd to deſtroy the Empire of the Perſians. I ſhall not enquire whether thoſe Two Events may be compar'd in every thing: 'tis falſe that *Alexander* had no other way, and they differ in other things: But however it appears from thoſe words that *Joſephus* believe, not without reaſon, that *Alexander*'s Paſſage was like that of the *Iſraelites* in this, *Viz.* in his going thro' the Sea, when the Wind turn'd, which he could not do, whilſt it blew. I ſhall here ſet down the words of *Arrianus*, who relates the thing thus, Book I. *He lead thoſe who were with him thro' the Sea all along the Shore. No Body can go that way, but when the North-Wind blows; but if the South-Wind blows hard, none can go thro' the Shore. It happen'd then, not without the Will of God (as he, and thoſe that were with him ſaid) that a violent South-Wind turn'd into the North, and ſo he had a quick and eaſie Paſſage.* It appears from thoſe words of *Arrianus*, who relates the thing, as *Joſephus* underſtood it, that this latter Hiſtorian had the ſame thoughts as I have concerning the Paſſage of the *Iſraelites* thro' the Red Sea.

Joſephus might alſo have added out of *Livy* Book XXVI. Ch. 45. if he knew it, what that Hiſtorian ſays concerning the taking of *New Carthage* by *P. Scipio Africanus*, to ſtop thereby the Mouth of the *Romans*, who denied the Truth of the Hiſtory of the *Hebrews*. The Words of *Livy* run thus: *As ſoon as he was told*

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told the Sea Ebbed, he lead his Army to it, becauſe he heard from ſome Fiſher Men, who had been there in ſome light Boats, and were gone thro' the Fords, when their Boats ſtuck, that he might eaſily go to the Wall of the Town a foot. It was about the middle of the day, and beſides the Water was going back according to its ordinary Ebbing, a violent North-Wind *aroſe blowing the ſame way the Sea Ebbed, which ſo laid open the Fords, that in ſome places the Water came only to the Belly, and in other places ſcarce to the Knee.* Scipio *having carefully obſerv'd this, and aſcribing it as a Prodigy to the Protection of the Gods, who open'd a new way for the* Romans *thro' the Sea, he commanded his Souldiers to follow* Neptune *as their Guide.* But neither *Scipio* nor *Alexander* could know that the North-Wind would blow, when it was neceſſary for them: And ſeeing the Providence of God ruled the Actions of the Heathens, not only thoſe of the *Hebrews*, nothing hinders but he might ſometimes deſignedly help Natural Cauſes on their behalf.

VII. It appears alſo from the Death of the *Egyptians*, that the Sea was divided, as I have ſaid. Firſt, *Moſes* ſays, that when the *Iſraelites* went into the Sea, *The Egyptians purſued and went in after them*, in the Night-time, *to the midſt of the Sea, even all Pharaoh's Horſes, his Chariots, and Horſe-men*, Exod. 14. 23. The *Egyptians* believed that the *Iſraelites* took hold of the Opportunity of an Ebbing, which was greater

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greater than it uſed to be; and that therefore they ought preſently to purſue them, leaſt the Paſſage ſhould be ſtopt by the return of the Waters. Tho' the *Egyptians* were tranſported with anger, yet, had they ſuſpected that it was a Prodigy, they had certainly never been ſo mad as to go into the Channel of the Sea; and they might have ſeen that it was undoubtedly a Miracle, were it not that they might with ſome likelyhood aſcribe the thing to an Extraordinary Reflux.

When the whole Army of the *Egyptians* came into the Sea, and the *Iſraelites* got to the oppoſite Shore, that is, in the Third Watch of the Night, as we learn from what follows, *Moſes* was commanded to ſmite the Sea, which being done, Exod. 14. 27. *The Sea return'd to its ſtrength, when the morning appear'd.* Which ſeems not to have happen'd by degrees, but God made uſe of an extraordinary South-Wind, which brought back with a great violence and in a very ſhort time the Waves, which ſtood ſtill by the ſtrength of the North-Wind. This we learn from *Moſes*'s Song, *Exod.* 15. 10. *Thou didſt blow with thy Wind, the Sea covered them: They ſank as lead in the mighty Waters,* &c. If the Waters were congealed and heaped up on both ſides, what need was there of a Wind, to make them return to their place? As they ſtood up only by the Will of God; they might return into their Channel by the ſame Will, provided God would have recall'd the

Efficacy

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Efficacy of his Power; for they had dropt down by their weight like melted Ice.

Leſt the *Egyptians* ſhould avoid by flying the violence of the Reflux, beſides the South-Wind by which it was haſten'd, *Moſes* ſays, That God *Troubled the Hoſt of the Egyptians, and took off their Chariot-wheels, that they drave them heavily*, Exod. 14. 24, 25. That we may the better underſtand this, we muſt remember that the Army of the *Egyptians* was made up only of Chariots and Horſe-men. For *Pharaoh* brought with him no Infantry, to overtake more eaſily the *Iſraelites*, nor did he want any, ſeeing he might eaſily rout an unarm'd People only with his Chariots and Horſe-men. Beſides the March of the Horſe-men and Chariots was made ſlower by a ſecret Efficacy of the Divine Power, Three things might make that Paſſage more difficult to the *Egyptians* than to the *Iſraelites*.

1. There might be in ſome Places abundance of Mires too deep to drive Chariots and Horſes thro' them without great trouble; whereas Men a Foot might eaſily get over them, eſpecially the *Iſraelites*, who were uſed to wander with their Flocks in the Marſhes of *Egypt*. Tho' the Bottom of the Sea is not the ſame every where, yet no Body will wonder, that I ſay there might be here and there ſome Miry Places in a Space, that was ſome Miles Broad, a little while after the Sea left it.

2. If there were no Mires in ſome places there was

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was abundance of deep Sand, in which Wheels will ſink deeply, and thro' which Horſes can go but ſlowly. *Diodorus Siculus* ſays Book III. There is a vaſt quantity of Dirt and Sand in that Sea, and that the Floods ſometimes carry ſo much Sand about the Ships that Sail in it, that they ſtick faſt in the Ground. That Sand hindered without doubt the Chariots and Horſes from going faſt. If it be objected that *Moſes* ſays ſeveral times that the *Iſraelites* went thro' the Sea as thro' a *Dry* Land; I anſwer, It ought not to be ſo underſtood, as if the Channel of the Sea had not been ſo much as moiſt and dirty. The Land is ſaid to be *Dry*, becauſe there was no Waves upon it, and it is oppoſed not to Moiſtneſs but to Water, as *Gen.* 1. 9. *And God ſaid, let the Waters under the Heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the Dry Land appear — and God called the Dry Land Earth.* See alſo Chap. 8. 13. *Philo* therefore laid too great a ſtreſs upon that Word, when he ſaid that the *Iſrelites* went thro' the Sea *as thro' a way paved with Stones*; *for*, (as he goes on) *the Sand grew hard, and made one ſolid Body.* Miracles have been often invented, (to explain ſome Words of Scripture upon which they put too literal a Senſe) of which the Holy Writers never ſo much as dream'd.

3. The Bottom of the Sea being uneven, and full of Rocks and † Shrubs, could not give a

† See *Theophras.* Hiſt. of Plants. Book. IV. ch. 8.

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Free paſſage to the Chariots. Nay, 'twas almoſt impoſſible for thoſe, who drived the Chariots, and haſtened to purſue the *Iſraelites* in the Night time, and then to make their eſcape to the *Egyptian* Shores, not to encumber and hinder one another, and even to overturn their Chariots, and break the Wheels againſt the Rocks. Now ſome Chariots overturned or broke, were ſufficient to diſturb the whole Army, and it could go but ſlowly, whilſt their Ranks were broke, and every Horſeman endeavoured to go faſter then another. This *Moſes* ſeems to teach us in the words I have quoted. All which things I have mentioned, did without doubt hinder the march of the Horſe and Chariots.

When the *Iſraelites* ſaw this, beſides they perhaps obſerved that the Wind was turned, knowing that the Sea would preſently flow in, they began to think more ſeriouſly of making their eſcape. Then at laſt they perceived, that the God of the *Iſraelites* was not leſs Powerful in the Sea, then he had been in *Egypt*. So that condemning their raſhneſs, they turned back, and made haſte to the *Egyptian* Shoar; but the Waves breaking upon them they were Drowned. *Joſephus* not only ſays, that the Water of the Sea was driven on the *Egyptians* by the Wind, but alſo, that there aroſe at the ſame time a violent Storm, which perhaps he learned from the *Egyptian* Prieſts of his time. The *Egyptians* added, that their Anceſtors were forced

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forced to come home, and leave off purſuing the *Iſraelites*, by reaſon of the Storms, as it appears from *Juſtin*, *Book* 26. *Ch.* 2. But *Moſes* ſays, that they all Periſhed in the Sea, and that not one of them eſcaped to bring the News of their Calamity. From whence one may obſerve by the bye, that *Joſephus* omitted that part of the Tradition of the *Egyptians*, becauſe it was contrary to the Hiſtory of *Moſes*; but willingly alledged, according to his Cuſtom, that part which was not inconſiſtent with it.

VIII. If the Hiſtories of *Manetho*, and of ſome others, who wrote the Antiquities of the *Egyptians* were extant, we might perhaps find in them ſeveral Footſteps of the Truth, which *Joſephus*, who made uſe of them did not ſee. Indeed 'tis certain, as ſeveral Learned Men have obſerved, that in the Fragments which he hath preſerved to us, there are many things which he underſtood not well. There is ſomething in *Strabo*, *Book* XVI. which ſeems to belong to the paſſage of the *Iſraelites* thro' the *Red Sea*, tho' he ſays it happened in a Neighbouring Country. *A wonderful and extraordinary thing*, ſays that Author, *is reported to have happened in the Shoar between* Tyre *and* Ptolemaïs. 'Tis ſaid, *That the Inhabitants of* Ptolemaïs, *having engaged in a battle with General* Sarpedon; *and being put to flight, were overwhelm'd as they fled, by the Sea coming upon them as a Tide; and that ſome were carried into the Sea, and others left dead in ſome low Places. Afterwards, when the*

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the Sea Ebbed, their Bodies were found lying promiſcuouſly among dead Fiſhes. What happen'd in the *Red Sea*, was transferred to the Shoars of *Tyre*, and diſguiſed with falſe Circumſtances. The word *Sarpedon* was alſo falſly accounted a Proper Name; for *Sar-Phadon* in *Hebrew*, ſignifies the *Head of Deliverance*, or of thoſe who are Delivered, which *Encomium* ſuits *Moſes* very well. *Diodorus Siculus* heard the *Troglodit*æ report a like thing. *'Tis reported*, ſays he, *by the* Ichthyaphagi, *who live near that Sea, as they have it from their Anceſtors, that there having been a* GREAT REFLUX, *the whole Channel of the Gulph was dried up, and lookt Green: And when the Earth had been ſeen at the bottom, a violent Flowing came in of a ſudden, and reſtored the Channel to its former State.* Which Words deſcribe the thing well enough, as I have ſhewed that it happened.

Indeed, if the *Ichthyophagi* ſaid nothing elſe, they were more modeſt than ſome Chriſtians, who having made themſelves Maſters of thoſe places, have corrupted every thing with abundance of feigned Tales; an Example of which we find in *Oroſius*, Book I. Ch. 10. *There remains ſtill*, ſays he, *ſome certain Monuments of that event. For the* Track *of the Chariots and Wheels may be ſeen, not only in the ſhore, but alſo at the bottom, as far as the ſight can reach, and if it be confounded, either by chance or out of curioſity, it is of a ſudden divinely reſtored to*

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its former ſtate, by the Winds and Waves; that whoſoever learns not to fear God, by applying himſelf to Religion, which he knows may be terrified by an ancient Example of God's Anger.

IX. I have hitherto ſufficiently ſhewed, how God opened a paſſage for the *Iſraelites* through the *Red Sea*; but I have not ſhewed yet what was done by the ordinary Laws of Nature, and what by an extraordinary effect of the Divine Power: What happens after the latter manner, is called *a Miracle* in the Stile of Chriſtians, but Events of the former kind go not by that Name. Again, There are *two ſorts* of things which God does above the order of Nature; ſome are ſuch, as cannot be aſcribed to natural Cauſes, as things are now: For Example, If a body heavier than another goes not below it, as if an Iron thrown into the Water ſinks not, if a humane Body remains in the midſt of Flames without being hurt in the leaſt, and the like. Others being conſidered in themſelves, might be lookt upon as the Effects of natural Cauſes, ſuch are an extraordinary Wind, and Reflux of the Sea. Natural Cauſes may produce them, and often do it: But if God does thoſe things and the like, by an Act of his Will, without uſing natural Cauſes, and without expecting the Order he eſtabliſhed from the beginning of the World; then, I ſay, what was not a Miracle by its Nature, is rightly called ſo. If God by his ſpecial Will raiſes a Wind, when

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no Wind had riſen by the ordinary Courſe of Nature, and drives the Waves much farther than they uſed to go, when the Reflux had not been greater than it uſed to be by the ordinary Laws of Nature, thoſe things are call'd Miracles, and are really ſo.

There might be therefore Miracles of both ſorts in what happen'd to the Red Sea. Perhaps the North-Wind had not blown, if God had not raiſed it, and cauſed the South-Wind to ceaſe. Perhaps the ſtrength of that Wind was ſo great by the Will of God, that no Natural Wind could have removed the Sea ſo far. The ſame may be ſaid of the Reflux: Perhaps the Sea had not returned back when it did, if God had not removed it, nor would it, by its natural Ebbing, have gone back ſo far as to leave a Paſſage Large enough for ſo many Thouſands of Men.

This therefore muſt be granted to us, even by obſtinate Men, that there might be ſome *Miracles* properly ſo call'd in that Event; provided the thing happen'd, as 'tis related, which I think I may now take for granted. But it will be ask'd, how ſhall we know that thoſe things happn'd, not by Natural Cauſes, but by an Extraordinary Effect of God's Power? In anſwer to which, I ſay, Firſt, that the Extraordinary ſtrenth of the Wind, and the Reflux which was ſo great, that perhaps the like was never ſeen, ſhew the Power of God in them. Secondly,

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ly, if nothing Extraordinary happen'd, the *Egyptians* had no reaſon to rejoyce, nor the *Iſraelites* to be Terrified, when they ſaw themſelves ſhut up between the Sea and the Mountains, for they might eſcape by expecting the Reflux of the Sea; nor is it likely that ſo many Thouſands of Men knew nothing of the Nature of the Ocean, from which their former Habitation was but a few days journey diſtant. Laſtly, it was alſo a *Miracle* in this reſpect, *Viz.* Becauſe *Moſes*, who could expect nothing elſe but an Ordinary Reflux, foretold the *Iſraelites* that the *Egyptians* ſhould periſh, but that they themſelves ſhould eſcape without any damage. *Fear ye not*, ſays he, *ſtand ſtill, and ſee the ſalvation of the Lord, which he will ſhew to you to day: for the Egyptians, whom ye have ſeen to day, ye ſhall ſee them again no more, for ever.* Could any Humane Prudence foreſee that, and that there would be a place in the Channel left dry, and ſo large, that ſo many Thouſands of Men might go thro' it in few Hours without any danger; and that the *Egyptians* ſhould be ſo blinded as to follow the *Iſraelits*, thinking there was nothing Extraordinary in the matter? If it be ſaid, that God revealed this to *Moſes*, we have what we deſire, for the very Revelation will be a great Miracle. When a Miracle is foretold, before it happens, 'tis a moſt certain *Criterium* of ſuch a Miracle; for from thence it may be evidently inferred, that God

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